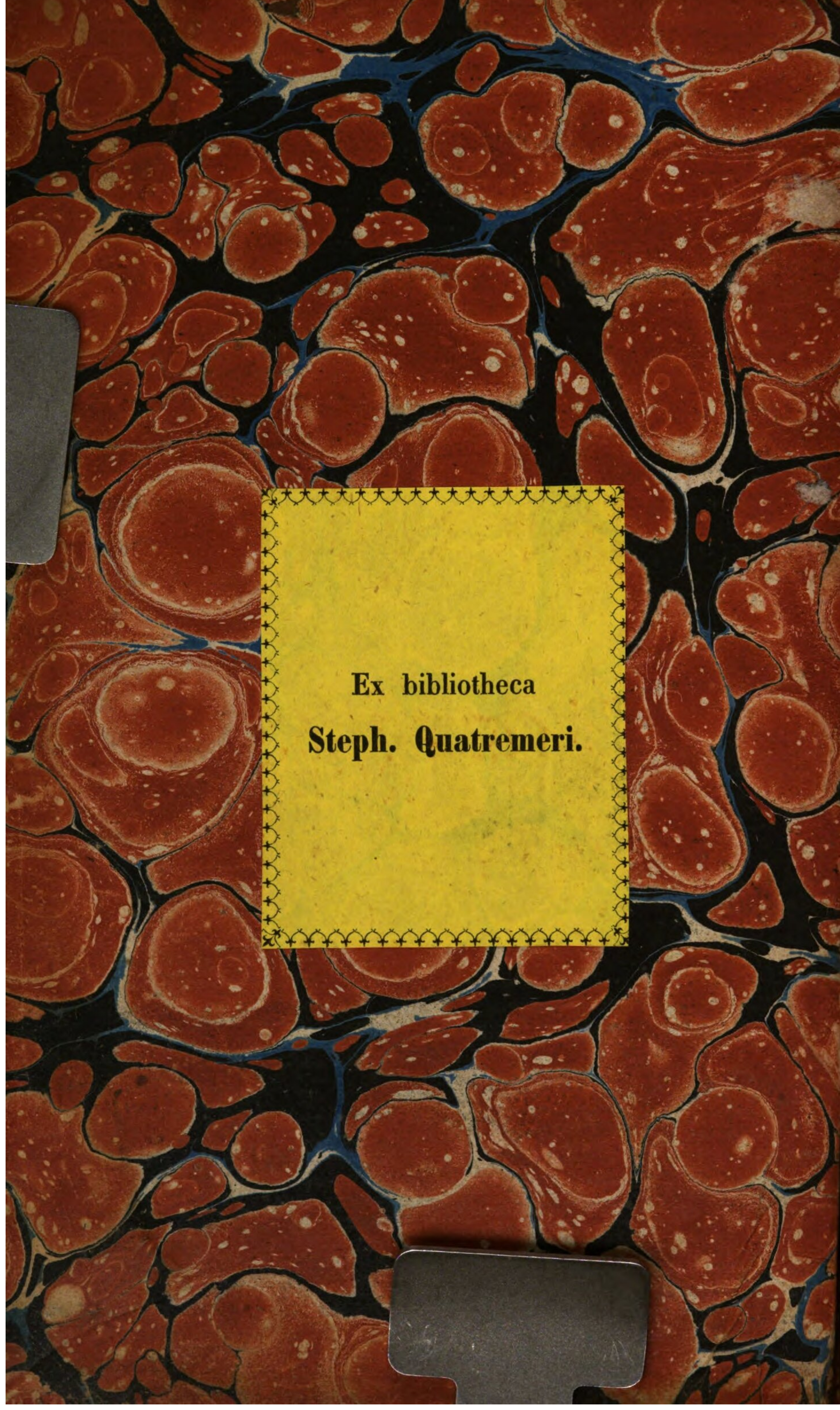
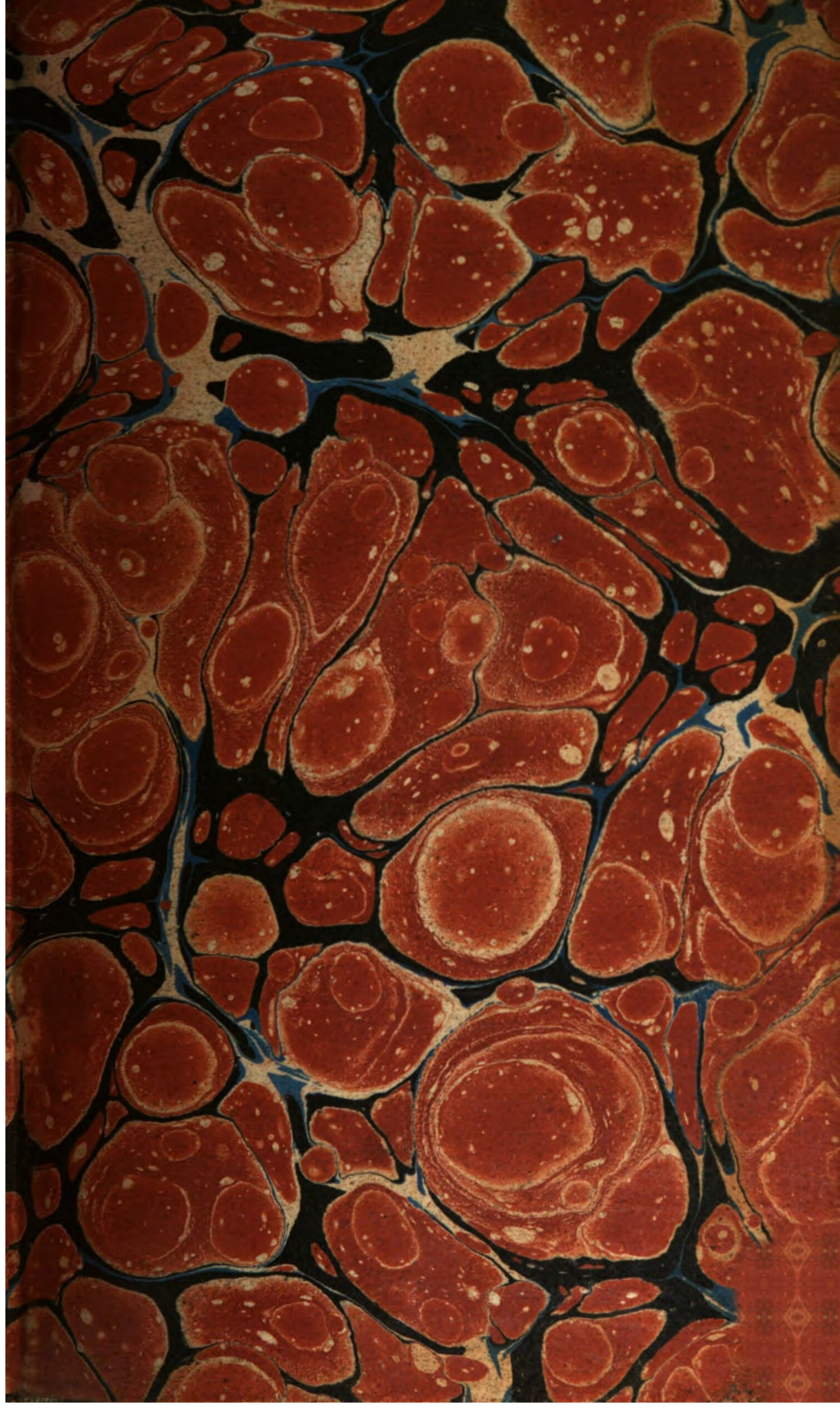




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ELEMENTS
OF
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE,
INTRODUCTORY TO
USEFUL BOOKS IN THE PRINCIPAL BRANCHES
OF
LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.
WITH
LISTS OF THE MOST APPROVED AUTHORS;
INCLUDING THE
BEST EDITIONS OF THE CLASSICS,
DESIGNED CHIEFLY FOR THE
JUNIOR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITIES,
AND THE
HIGHER CLASSES IN SCHOOLS.

By HENRY KETT, B.D.
FELLOW AND TUTOR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE SIXTH EDITION,
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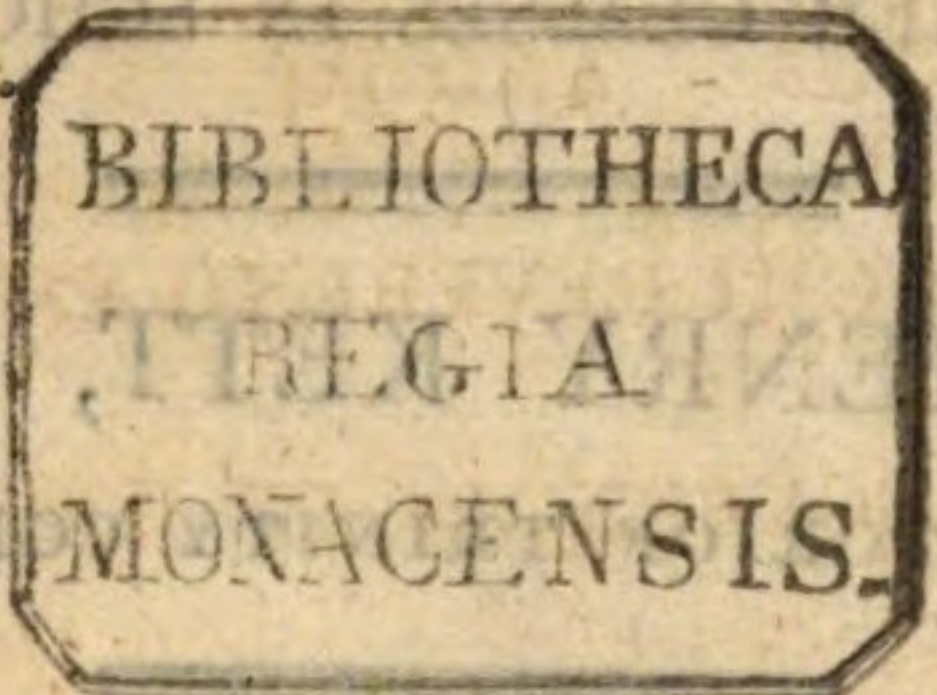
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TO THE
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DUKE OF PORTLAND,

LORD PRESIDENT OF HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL,
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD;

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ELDON,

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND,

HIGH STEWARD OF THE UNIVERSITY;

THE REVEREND MICHAEL MARLOW, D.D.

PRESIDENT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE,

AND VICE-CHANCELLOR;

AND TO

THE OTHER RIGHT REVEREND AND REVEREND

THE HEADS AND GOVERNORS OF COLLEGES AND HALLS

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THE FOLLOWING WORK

IS WITH THEIR PERMISSION RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

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MAY 12, 1802.

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PREFACE.

THE following Work originally contained the substance of a course of Lectures, which the Author occasionally read to his Pupils. The satisfaction they expressed in hearing them, encouraged him to hope, that they would not prove unacceptable to those readers for whose use they were made public. He has not been disappointed in his expectation; and the favourable reception which his work has met with, has induced him to revise the whole, and to make some considerable improvements in the present edition. The List of Books has been particularly attended to; and he has endeavoured to make it more comprehensive from a desire to sketch such a prospect of the best publications, as may be pleasing to every enquirer into useful and entertaining Literature.

To lay claim to originality of subject in such a Work as this, in order to recommend it to notice, would prove the unfitness of the writer for the task he has undertaken, and be a presumptuous and vain attempt to impose upon the good sense of his readers. His pretensions to public regard must in a great measure depend, not on the novelty of his

materials, but upon his judgment in selecting, and his skill in compressing within a moderate compass, the substance of larger and more voluminous works; and upon the manner in which he has clothed old ideas in a new dress. Upon all his subjects, he has endeavoured to reflect light from every quarter which his reading and observation have afforded to him.

In the former Editions, it was his earnest endeavour to make due acknowledgments for the assistance he derived from various sources. His obligations have been increased in the course of preparing the present Edition for the press; and the labour of his researches has been considerably abridged, by the information obtained from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *Misson's Elements of the Arts*, *Robertson's History of America*, and *Tytler's Elements of General History*. The use he has made of these excellent works is the best proof of his opinion of their merit.

We happily live at a time when we may congratulate the rising generation on the new establishments made for the advancement of knowledge, and the additional means adopted for the diffusion of a taste for literature and science. The Academy instituted at Marlow for Military Students, that now building at Hertford, for those who are designed for the civil service in India, and the New College about to be erected at Cambridge, promise to answer the excellent purposes of their
respective

respective founders. The Royal Institution in London engages the fair and the fashionable in the cause of polite Literature and Science; and the high reputation it has acquired, has promoted a similar establishment in another part of the Metropolis. Thus the talents and the attainments of eminent Professors are called into action; their labours are adapted to the peculiar profession for which young men are intended, and the curiosity of the public at large is gratified to a degree unprecedented in former times, by the diffusion of various kinds of knowledge.

It is the boast of the enemies of Great Britain, that they give encouragement to Science in the midst of War. Possessed of such ample means of information as our celebrated Universities and Schools afford us, aided by recent establishments, it should be our ambition to emulate them in the cultivation of the mind, and to convince them, by the exertion of our intellectual powers in the cause of Learning and Science, that we have a claim to pre-eminence in the republic of letters, similar to that we have established to the empire of the ocean.

Whatever progress may have been made in the course of the last century, in any branches of Literature, Science, and the polite Arts, we may be assured, that the untutored mind can receive little satisfaction or improvement from them; it must be furnished with preparatory information upon the respective subjects; hence arises the

utility of Elementary Works; the seeds of learning must be first sown before flowers can expand, and fruit can ripen and be gathered.

That no work of man can be free from imperfection and error, is a truth which the author would not repeat, if his experience did not fully convince him, that it is applicable in a peculiar degree to publications of this kind. He must, therefore, make his appeal to the candour of the public, with the faithful declaration that he has rendered his Work as correct and complete as his professional avocations and precarious health have allowed. He wishes those who may complain of his want of brevity, to consider the great extent of every one of the subjects he has undertaken to treat; and those who, from a predilection for some particular topic, may wish for a fuller view of it, are requested to recollect, that he professes to state principles only, and not to give complete systems of Science, or to particularise long details of History; and he trusts he may assert, with no less confidence than truth, that it will not be easy to find such a variety of information, contained within the same number of pages, in any work of the price in our Language.

The motive which prompted him to undertake this Work, still continues to stimulate him in every stage of its progress—an ardent desire to extend useful instruction beyond the narrow professional sphere in which he moves. If he should excite
curiosity,

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Trinity College, Oxford,

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GENERAL

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ERRATA.

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THE INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

TO separate some of the most useful and the most beautiful parts from the great mass of human knowledge ; to arrange them in such regular order, that they may be inspected with ease, and varied at pleasure ; and to recommend them to the careful examination of young men who are studiously disposed, constitute the design of the Author of this work.

It is likewise his object to make the most useful topics of literature familiar and easy to general Readers, who have not had the advantage of a learned education.

The more he reflects upon the PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY, the VARIOUS FACULTIES of the mind, and the GREAT ADVANTAGES which arise from acquiring an AMPLE FUND OF VALUABLE IDEAS, the more he is convinced of the utility of engaging in the pursuit of general knowledge, *as far as may*

be consistent with professional views, and particular situations in life.

The custom has prevailed of late years, much more than it did formerly, of introducing young men at an early age into the mixed company of persons older than themselves. As such is the reigning mode, they ought to be prepared in some degree at least to blend manly and serious topics with the fallies of light and gay conversation. And, in order to be qualified for the introduction of such subjects, it seems requisite to unite to the study of the learned languages, other attainments, which have a reference to the sciences, the works of nature, and the affairs of active life.

The improvements of the times have turned the attention of the learned to new pursuits, and given their conduct a new direction. The Scholar, no longer confined within the walls of a College, as was formerly the case, now mixes in general society, and adapts his studies to an enlarged sphere of observation: he does not limit his reading to the works of the ancients, or to his professional researches alone; but shows his proficiency in the various parts of literature, which are interesting to the world at large.

The condition of social intercourse among those, who have had the advantages of a liberal education, is at present so happily improved, that a free communication subsists between all intelligent
and

and well-informed men. The Divine, the Physician, the Barrister, the Artist, and the Merchant, associate without reserve, and augment the pleasure they derive from conversation, in proportion as they obtain an insight into various pursuits and occupations. The more ideas they acquire in common, the sooner their prejudices are removed, a more perfect congeniality of opinion prevails, they rise higher in each other's estimation, and the pleasure of society is ripened into the sentiments of attachment and friendship. In such parties, where "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" prevail with the happiest effect, he who unites to knowledge of the world the leading ideas and rational principles, which well-chosen books can supply, will render himself the most acceptable, and the most valuable companion.

Such are now the abundant productions of the press, that books written in our own language upon all subjects whatever are constantly published, and quickly circulate through the whole kingdom. This circumstance has lessened that wide and very evident distinction, which in former times prevailed between the learned and the unlearned classes of the community. At present, they who have not enjoyed the benefit of a classical education may reap many of the fruits of learning without the labour of cultivation, as translations furnish them with convenient and easy expedients, which can in some measure, although an incomplete one, make amends for their ignorance of the original authors. And

upon all subjects of general Literature, Science, and Taste, in their actual and most highly improved state, they have the same means of information in their power with those who have been regularly educated in the Universities, and the public schools.

Thus favourable are the temper and the circumstances of the Times to the diffusion of knowledge. And if the most mature and deliberate decisions of reflection and experience be required to give weight to the opinion, that comprehensive views of learning and science are calculated to produce the best effects upon the mind, reference can be made to both ancient and modern authorities—to writers of no less eminence than Quintilian, Milton, and Locke. Their observations tend to prove, that close attention to a professional study, is an affair of the first importance, but that invariable and exclusive application to any one pursuit is the certain mark of a contracted education. For hence the student is led to form a dislike to occupations dissimilar to his own, and to entertain prejudices against those who exercise them. He is liable to view mankind and their employments through a wrong and a discoloured medium, and to make imperfect, if not false estimates of their use and value. In order to prevent such contractedness of disposition, and such errors of judgment, what method can be more efficacious, than to open some of the gates of general knowledge, and display its most beautiful prospects to his view?

Such

Such Prospects, distinctly and deliberately surveyed, will produce the most beneficial effects upon his temper and opinions. While they place before him the means of increasing his information, they will render him a more correct judge of its value, and secure him from conceit, affectation, and pedantry. They will render him more capable of appreciating the relative importance and comparative merit of different studies, when referred to the use and ornament of life. He will discern the natural affinity which subsists between the different branches of polite literature, and how capable they are of increasing the influence, and improving the beauties of each other. In short, various pursuits, skilfully chosen and assiduously followed, can give proper activity to every faculty of the mind, inasmuch as they engage the judgment, the memory, and the imagination, in an agreeable exercise, and are associated for one beneficial purpose—like the genial drops of rain, which descend from heaven, they unite in one common stream to strengthen and enlarge the current of knowledge.

By studies thus diversified, the mind is supplied with copious materials for the serious reflexions of retirement, or the lively intercourse of society; it is enabled, by the combination of many particular ideas, to form those general principles, which it is always eager to embrace, which are of great use in the conduct of life, and may prove in every

situation pleasing and advantageous. In short, such a plan is calculated to disseminate that knowledge, which is adapted to the present improved state of society, to divest learning of pedantry, and to afford the scholar some insight into the researches of the philosopher, the occupations of the man of business, and the pleasures of the man of taste.

And as the Arts and Sciences bestow mutual assistance, and reflect mutual light, so are they highly efficacious and beneficial when combined with professional knowledge. To some professions indeed they are essentially necessary, to all they are ornamental. They afford illustrations which render professional studies more easy to be understood, and they furnish supplies, which are conducive to their complete success.

Every one must allow, that all systems of Education, if constituted upon right principles, should be well adapted to the situations of those, for whose service they are intended. In selecting the topics of the following work, I have therefore considered Young Men, with a view to their most important relations in life, as CHRISTIANS, as STUDENTS, and as MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, the welfare and prosperity of which depend upon the usefulness of their attainments, and the respectability of their conduct.

It

It is evident from general observation, that the principles of religion are congenial with the mind of man: for even among tribes the most barbarous and uncivilized, whether we explore the wilds of Africa, or the shores of the Pacific Ocean, where the capacities of the inhabitants are narrow and limited, and very few virtues are remarked to expand and flourish; some traces of religion, some notions of an Omnipotent and Over-ruling Power, darkened as they may be by gross superstition, are still found to prevail. And even in the civilized country of France, where the impious abettors of the Revolution proceeded so far as to insult the reason of an enlightened people, by compelling them to abjure their faith in their Creator and their Redeemer, how difficult has it been found to produce even external conformity to their decrees; and with what ardour are the people returning to the open profession of Christianity, now their Ruler is fully aware of the expediency of its revival and public exercise! It appears therefore, that to inculcate those principles of religious duty, which the mind naturally invites, and to improve its capacity for the reception of the most sublime truths, is no more than a proper attention and due obedience to the voice of Nature.

And as the truth of Christianity is founded upon the strongest arguments, and unites in the closest union our public and private, our temporal and eternal happiness, it justly forms the groundwork of Education. The attributes of the great

Creator—his power as the Author, and his goodness as the Governor of the universe—the bright example of the Saviour of the world, as represented by the holy Evangelists—his actions marked by the purest benevolence, his precepts tending immediately to the happiness of man, and his promises capable of exciting the most exalted and most glorious hopes, are peculiarly calculated to strike the imagination, and interest the sensibility of youth. Such sublime topics, inculcated upon right principles, cannot fail to encourage those ardent sentiments of love, gratitude, and veneration, which are natural to susceptible and tender minds. Since therefore the same principles which are congenial with the dispositions of young men are most conducive to their happiness; since, in short, the evidences of CHRISTIANITY are miraculous;—since it is an express revelation of the will of God, and as such we can have no pretence to reject its proofs, and no right to resist its claims to our observance; it must unquestionably be a subject of transcendent importance, and therefore stands as the *first* and *leading* topic of my work.

As the knowledge of LANGUAGE is intimately connected with every other kind of information, and as in the Languages of ancient GREECE and ROME are preserved some of the noblest productions of human genius, I assign to these subjects the next place.

In recommendation of OUR OWN LANGUAGE it

is

is superfluous to have recourse to arguments. All who are acquainted with it, foreigners as well as natives, must be convinced of its excellence, particularly as it is the vehicle of productions eminently distinguished by Genius, Taste, Learning, and Science.

And as Language should be considered not merely as a channel to convey our thoughts upon common occasions, but as capable of ornament to please, and of energy to persuade mankind; and as such improvements are both gratifying and beneficial to society, proper attention is due to the study of ELOQUENCE.

Cicero, the most celebrated of Roman Orators, has very justly remarked, that ignorance of the events and transactions of former times condemns us to a perpetual state of childhood: from this condition of mental darkness we are rescued by HISTORY, which supplies us with its friendly light to view the instructive events of past ages, and to collect wisdom from the conduct of others. And as there are particular countries, from which we have derived the most important information in Religion, Arts, Sciences, and Literature, we ought carefully to inspect the pages of their interesting records.

The most ancient people of whom we have any authentic accounts, are the JEWS: to them was communicated, and by them was preserved, the knowledge of the true God; while all other nations were

were sunk in the most abject superstition, and disgraced by the grossest idolatry.

The writers of GREECE and ROME have recorded such numerous and such eminent instances of the genius, valour, and wisdom of their countrymen, as have been the just subjects of the admiration of all succeeding ages; for which reason the accounts of their memorable transactions ought to be carefully inspected before we proceed to survey the HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE, and OF OUR NATIVE COUNTRY.

As Reason is the noblest faculty of the human mind, it is of the highest importance to consider its proper employment, more especially as upon its co-operation with Religion in controlling the flights of the imagination, and abating the violence of the passions, depends the happiness of life. That system of LOGIC, therefore, which consists not in abstruse terms, or argumentative subtlety, but in the manly exercise of the rational powers, justly claims an important place in every system of education.

The various discoveries and improvements in SCIENCE and PHILOSOPHY constitute a peculiar distinction between ancient and modern times. Problems of science, like the arguments of Logic, employ the mind in the vigorous exercise of its powers, and confirm the habits of close application, which are essentially necessary in the prosecution of

of every kind of study. Such are the reasons for introducing and recommending due attention to the principles of the MATHEMATICS.

The human mind, not content with speculations upon the properties of matter alone, delights to survey the wonderful works of the GREAT CREATOR, as displayed in the various parts of the universe. This employment is a source of never-failing satisfaction to persons of every age. The productions of the animal, the vegetable and the mineral kingdoms are closely connected with the well-being, and are conducive to the subsistence of man; so that NATURAL HISTORY claims his particular attention.

And as the elegant Arts possess a pleasing influence over the imagination, and furnish a constant variety of amusement and pleasure, it is highly desirable to examine the principles, and consider the application of a correct taste to the beauties of PAINTING, POETRY, and MUSIC.

In the welfare and prosperity of his native country every Briton is deeply interested. The two great sources of its support, its opulence, and its glory, are AGRICULTURE and COMMERCE; to have a knowledge of their leading principles must be allowed to be highly useful and important to every English Gentleman.

Since

Since it is a prevailing fashion, particularly among the higher ranks of society, to complete the course of education by visiting foreign countries, it is useful to ascertain the advantages, which may be derived from the practice of TRAVELLING.

As attainments derive their greatest value from being directed to the purposes of active life, the qualifications requisite for a right conduct in the learned professions of LAW, PHYSIC, and DIVINITY, are taken into consideration.

And lastly, to point out the sources, from which the reader may draw more complete information upon all the preceding subjects, the work is closed with lists of THE MOST APPROVED AND INSTRUCTIVE BOOKS.

The *Order*, in which my *Chapters* are disposed, is adapted to the progress of the faculties of the mind,—the memory, the imagination, and the judgment. The principles of Religion, of Language, and of History, are first presented to my Readers; and the elements of Science, Natural History, and Taste, together with the various studies, which relate to the active scenes of life, close the volumes of instruction. The foundations of knowledge are deeply laid, and are composed of the most solid materials; the superstructure, raised to a proper elevation, displays ornament, while it is adapted to convenience.

Such is the sketch of my design, in which it is intended to trace the regular progress of application, from puerile to manly studies—from elementary knowledge to professional duties. It is sufficiently finished to shew, that the fields of instruction are not only fertile, but the most various in their productions. Some spots bring forth the immortal fruits of Religion, some the hardy plants of Science, and some the delicate flowers of Taste. Here then the active temper of youth, and their fondness for change, may find ample means of gratification, wherever they choose to wander and expatiate. Light pursuits may divert, after severe studies have fatigued the mind; and he who has been diligent to peruse the records of history, to solve the problems of science, or ascertain the distinctions of logic, may find an agreeable relaxation in surveying the beauties of nature, in charming his ear with the delightful strains of music, pleasing his eye with the fair creations of the pencil, or delighting his fancy with the fictions of poetry.

With respect to my choice of Books, I wish it not to escape the observation of the reader, that I have rejected some works with as much readiness as I have adopted others. Very few *Novels* will appear in my lists, as I am well convinced of their pernicious tendency. If we take the most superficial survey of the Circulating Libraries, we may observe, that the ingenuity of our own authors is sufficiently fertile in these flimsy and short-lived publications; and yet Germany and France contribute their aid

to satisfy the craving appetite of the British public, with such success, that some of their productions are as popular as our own. It is to be lamented, that *most* Novels do no small injury to the cause of sound and wholesome literature, as well as to that of morality. They vitiate the taste of their readers, destroy their relish for useful books, and make the facts of history, and even the descriptions of poetry, appear dull and insipid. It were well if their bad effects terminated at this point: but as they are generally filled with licentious descriptions, improbable incidents, false sentiments, and such sophistical arguments, as may serve to justify the most improper actions; they tend to excite a romantic sensibility, pervert the judgment of the young and inexperienced, inflame the passions, and corrupt the heart.

Let it likewise be carefully remarked, that I am under very few obligations to the founders of the new school of *Philosophism* in France. So far indeed from wishing to direct the attention of my readers to their works, it is my anxious desire to caution them against the insidious arts, the flimsy sophistry, and the excessive arrogance of the modern French writers, particularly *Voltaire*, *Rousseau*, *D'Alembert*, *Diderot*, *Helvetius*, and *Volney*; and their imitators and admirers, whoever they may be in our own, or any other country. In direct and decided opposition to their spurious philosophy, their abuse of the powers of reason, their profligate and delusive speculations upon the subjects of Religion,

ligion, Morality, and Government, their folly in rejecting whatever is old, and their precipitation in embracing whatever is new, I avow my firm conviction, that there is no greater or more fruitful source of mischief and misery, than a wild, unrestrained ardour for innovation: I MAINTAIN THE TRUTH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION, THE VALUE OF ANCIENT LEARNING, THE DIGNITY OF SCIENCE, AND THE EXCELLENCE OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION. And in order to provide the most efficacious antidote against the poison of their opinions, I recommend an intimate acquaintance with the eminent divines of the Church of England, such as CUDWORTH, BARROW, TILLOTSON, STILLINGFLEET, CLARKE, and PALEY; and with our great philosophers and moralists, BACON, LOCKE, BOYLE, NEWTON, ADDISON, and JOHNSON. These are the authors, whose understandings I reverence, whose opinions upon the leading subjects of Religion and Morality, I highly esteem, and whose excellent works I earnestly recommend. These are the writers, whom, in decided preference to all arrogant sciolists, and plausible infidels, I hold up to general attention, as the luminaries of useful knowledge, the teachers of genuine wisdom, and the true friends of mankind.

Such are the instructors, by whose assistance the student is advised to extend the sphere of his application beyond professional knowledge, and to cultivate

tivate some of the more open fields of useful and pleasing instruction.

I consider myself as assuming the office of a Guide to the youthful and inexperienced traveller, and as undertaking to point out the interesting prospects of a charming country, without aspiring to the accuracy of a topographer, or the diligence of an antiquarian. I shall conduct him, who commits himself to my directions, from a low and narrow valley, where his views have been closely confined, to the summit of a lofty mountain:—when he has reached the proper point of view, he will feel his faculties expand, he will breathe a purer air, enjoy a wider horizon, and observe woods, lakes, mountains, plains, and rivers, spreading beneath his feet in delightful prospect. From this commanding eminence, I shall point out such places as are most deserving his researches; and finally, I shall recommend him to those, who will prove more instructive, and more pleasing companions, through the remaining part of his journey.

CLASS THE FIRST.

RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

The Christian Religion.

THE seeds of religious knowledge are implanted in our minds during the earliest period of our lives. The notions of a Providence, and the various duties which we owe to God, to mankind, and to ourselves, are inculcated long before our judgments are sufficiently matured to determine the reasonableness, or estimate the utility, of moral and religious truth.

That the conduct of the instructors of children, in thus taking advantage of the curiosity and the docility of the infant mind, is not the result of superstition and credulity, but of good sense, and a proper regard to its best interests, and most valuable improvement, will appear, when the faculty of judgment is sufficiently strengthened by time to enable a young man to examine those principles, which he has been taught from his early years to hold venerable and sacred. To inquire on what account Christianity claims an ascendancy over all other branches of knowledge, and what are the particular grounds upon which he believes it to be

a divine Revelation, is a duty which he owes equally to his own reason, and to the dignity and importance of the subject itself.

“Revelation claims to be the voice of God, and our obligation to attend to his voice is surely moral in all cases. And as it is insisted that its evidence is conclusive, upon thorough consideration of it; so it offers itself to us with manifest obvious appearances of having something more than human in it, and therefore in all reason requires to have its claims most seriously examined into.”

Such an examination, conducted with that degree of care and attention, becoming the infinite importance of the subject, will clearly prove that the Christian Religion constitutes the most useful and the most sublime part of our knowledge. It introduces us to an acquaintance with those subjects, which are in the highest degree desirable to be known: as it opens the clearest prospect, that man in his present state can survey, of that Being, who is the essence of all perfection, the centre of infinite excellence, and the fountain of inexhaustible wisdom, goodness, and power. The knowledge of created beings is low and trivial when compared to this; for however admirable they may be in their construction, however useful in their nature and properties, and however stupendous in their frame and magnitude, they are still but faint shadows and

^a Butler's Analogy, p. 401.

imperfect

imperfect images of the glory of their Creator. The instruction, which the Christian Religion conveys, is not only of the most excellent kind, but its acquisition is above all things to be desired, especially when we consider the Almighty, with respect to the wonders of his power, and the dispensation of his Providence—when we view him by the clear light of the Christian Revelation, not only as the Maker and Governor of the universe, but as the Father of the Saviour of the world, whom he commissioned to proclaim his divine will, to establish the certainty of a future state, and to propose everlasting happiness to mankind, on condition of faith in his name, and obedience to his commands.

To know Christianity is therefore both to understand what the Supreme Being has revealed for our greatest good, and to ascertain what conduct we ought to pursue in order to obtain his approbation and favour. How low therefore must the acquirements of learning and science sink in our opinion, when placed in opposition to religious knowledge! But when it forms the basis upon which they are built, they derive additional value as well as strength from its support; they are consecrated to the best purposes, and directed to their most salutary ends. Much as the knowledge of the scholar, and the speculations of the philosopher may elevate and enlarge the mind, and much as they may improve and adorn it, they extend not our prospects beyond the world, they bound our views within the narrow

limits of human life. But the knowledge of a Christian takes a more exalted and a more certain aim ; it respects a degree of felicity, which exceeds our utmost powers of conception, and a situation of pleasure and delight without alloy, and without end—It relates to a state of existence, when the spirits of the just will be made perfect, and the transcendent bliss of angels will be imparted to glorified and immortal man.

Such being the excellence of Christianity, and such the important end, which it proposes, every person, who desires to be fully acquainted with divine truth, and to build his happiness upon the most solid basis, will take, with the greatest satisfaction, a particular and distinct view of its nature and evidences. Then will he avoid the imputation of being a Christian merely in compliance with the prejudices of his parents, or the customs of his native country ; and he will become one in consequence of a proper examination, and a rational preference^b. His conviction of its truth will then be

“^b Were a man designed onely, like a flie, to buzz about here for a time, sucking in the air, and licking the dew, then soon to vanish back into nothing, or to be transformed into worms ; how sorry and despicable a thing were he ? And such, without religion, we should be. But it supplieth us with business of a most worthy nature, and lofty importance ; it setteth us upon doing things great and noble as can be ; it engageth us to free our minds from all fond conceits, and cleanse our hearts from all corrupt affections ; to curb our brutish appetites, to tame our wild passions, to correct our perverse inclinations, to conform the dispositions

be solid and clear; he will plainly perceive the strength of its foundations, and fully understand the extent of its advantages: he will be persuaded that it bears the character and stamp of *Divinity*, and that it has every claim to the reception of mankind, which a divine Revelation can *reasonably* be expected to possess.

The proofs of the truth of the Christian Revelation are numerous, clear, and conclusive. The most obvious and striking are those which arise;
 I. From the AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. II. THE CHARACTER OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR. III. THE PROPHECIES of which he was the subject, as well as those which he delivered. IV. HIS MIRACLES. V. THE SUB-LIME MORALITY OF HIS PRECEPTS. And, VI. THE RAPID AND EXTENSIVE PROPAGATION OF HIS RELIGION under circumstances the most hostile to its advancement. These, together with some remarks on the futile objections of Unbelievers, and a concluding exhortation to perseverance in the duties of our holy religion, will form the subjects of this and the following chapter.

positions of our soul, and the actions of our life to the eternal laws of righteousness and goodness: it putteth us upon the imitation of God, and aiming at the resemblance of his perfections; upon obtaining a friendship, and maintaining a correspondence with the High and Holy one; upon fitting our minds for conversation and society with the wisest and purest spirits above; upon providing for an immortal state; upon the acquit of joy and glory everlasting." Barrow's Sermons, vol. 1. serm. iii. p. 36.

I. *The Authenticity of the Books of the New Testament.*

The New Testament is the source, from which the knowledge of the Christian system is derived. That the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles were written by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, neither Gentiles nor Jews have ever been so hardy as to deny. The Epistle to the Hebrews indeed, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, and two of the Epistles and the Revelation of St. John, were not received at first by all the congregations of Christians. As soon however as their authenticity was made known, they were admitted into the Canon of Scripture. That the Gospels are the same in every article of importance, as they were when first published by their respective authors, there can be no doubt; as they have been preserved through every successive age with the greatest care. From the time of the Apostles to the present hour, even those sects of Christians, that have been the most at variance upon other points, have concurred in guarding them with equal diligence, and have held them in equal veneration. The proofs of their genuineness are more numerous than can be adduced in favour of any other ancient writings. Every relation of a fact is marked by the most exact detail of names, persons, times, and places, that can in any degree throw light upon the subject, and establish its truth. The history, the manners, and the
opinions

opinions of the times, as they may be collected from all other accounts, agree with the narratives of the sacred Writers, and confirm their general veracity. The Evangelists were placed in situations the most favourable for obtaining complete and authentic information. St. Matthew and St. John, two of the disciples of our Lord, heard his divine instructions from his own mouth, beheld his astonishing miracles, and attended him during the whole course of his ministry. They drew their accounts from an intimate knowledge of persons, and a lively recollection of facts. St. Mark and St. Luke are entitled to all the credit of contemporary Biographers, as they were enabled to trace the truth to its source, in consequence of living in habits of the closest intimacy with those who had seen and conversed with our Lord. Few of those historians, whose works we most esteem, and whose fidelity we most respect, were so nearly connected with the subject of their writings, or possessed such ample means of genuine information. Any *one* of the Evangelists was perfectly well qualified to record the History of Christ, and to satisfy us upon his own credit only; and *all* of them taken together, and combining their accumulated strength, form a body of evidence sufficient to remove the scruples of every candid mind, and to establish the truth upon a solid and lasting foundation.

We may assert with the most perfect confidence and truth, that so far from there being any traces extant of a History of Christ and his followers, con-

tradiçtory to that of the Evangelists, there is not a contemporary, or a subsequent writer, whether Jewish or Pagan, who adverts to the subject at all, who does not *confirm* the leading facts of the Gospel History.

The New Testament likewise contains Epistles written by the holy persons, who were engaged in preaching the Gospel immediately after the ascension of their divine Master. These Epistles refer continually to the original facts contained in the Gospels, and confirm their truth. A perfect harmony of design is evident both in the one and the other. They prescribe the same rule of faith.—They inculcate the same articles to be believed, and the same precepts to be obeyed. They contain many striking references to the labours, which ^c St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, underwent; and the peculiar energy and earnestness, with which he addressed his converts, have all the marks of seriousness and sincerity, which can give to any writings whatever the stamp of originality^d. All these Epistles, when taken together, are not to be

^c See the animated and affecting description of his sufferings, 2 Cor. xi. &c.

^d The proofs of the genuineness of his Epistles deduced from remarkable coincidences, and close though not studied connexion with the Gospel History, as well as from allusions to particular incidents, persons, times, and places, are stated by Dr. Paley, with great precision and clearness. See more particularly his *Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 11, 14, 34, 169, 216, 312. He concludes with a short view of the external Evidence, p. 386, 403. And gives some striking remarks on the Talents, Character, and Conduct of St. Paul, p. 411.

considered

considered as composing a single evidence only, but as containing distinct and independent attestations of the truth of Christianity; for it is evident from their contents, that they were written by different persons, at various times, and upon various occasions. Even the little circumstances in which they differ from each other have their use, as they tend to prove that there was no plan preconceived by the writers, with a view to excite wonder, and obtain credit by any studied uniformity of representation.

He who peruses the Gospels and Epistles with attention, must be struck by a *remarkable peculiarity* of narrative and argument, which runs through every part of them. There is no appearance of artifice in the sacred Writers; no endeavour to raise the reputation of friends, or depreciate the characters of enemies. There is no effort made to reconcile the mind of the reader to what is marvellous in their narrative; no studied attempt to fire his imagination, or rouse his passions in their cause. All is fair, temperate, and candid. Vain, it is true, were the search for those ornaments which distinguish the classical writers: but still in their works there is frequently a pleasing simplicity, and sometimes a sublimity of expression, although these beauties seem rather to rise naturally out of the subject, than to result from the labour of composition, or any choice or arrangement of words. One circumstance there is, in which the New Testament rises to an elevation, which

which no other book can reach. Here presides the majesty of *pure and unsullied truth*, which shines in unadorned but awful state, and never turns aside to the blandishments of flattery, or listens to the insinuations of prejudice, or calumny. Here alone she invariably supports the same dignified and uniform character, and points with equal impartiality to Peter now professing his unalterable fidelity, and now denying his Lord;—to the Apostles at one time deserting Christ, and at another, hazarding their lives by the bold profession of his Gospel. And these plain characters of truth afford the clearest evidence of the inspiration of the sacred books. The Holy Spirit, whose assistance was promised to his disciples by their heavenly Master, guarded them from error in their narratives, in the statement both of their precepts and doctrines. Upon such momentous points, as contribute to form the rule and standard of faith and practice, they were guided by the divine wisdom, and thus are raised to a degree of authority and credibility unattainable by all other writers.

“It doth not appear, that ever it came into the mind of these writers, how this or the other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raised upon them. But without at all attending to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think, whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their testimony, there is no help for it; they

they tell the truth, and attend to nothing else. Surely this looks like sincerity, and that they published nothing to the world, but what they believed themselves^s."

An inquiry into the authenticity of the books of the New Testament is of great importance. If they are as ancient as they are reputed to be; if they were certainly written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, and have all the requisite characters of genuineness, we may venture to assert with confidence, that the facts contained in them are undeniably true. For supposing such actions as have been attributed to Christ never to have been performed, so great must have been the effrontery, as well as the ingenuity, of the fabricators of this story, if they proceeded to publish as true what they knew to be false, as to exceed the bounds of belief: and if, even for the sake of argument only, we suppose them to have combined in a confederacy for such a purpose, what would have been the consequence? They would only have given the desired advantage to their acute, active, and implacable enemies, who would quickly have detected the falsehood, sacrificed the abettors of it to their just indignation, and stigmatized the Christian Religion for ever as an imposture and a fable.

In the preservation of the New Testament, we

^s Duchal, quoted by Paley, vol. ii. p. 182.

may

may observe a very striking instance of the superintendence of divine Providence, ever watchful for the happiness of mankind. Notwithstanding the various dissensions which have continued to prevail in the Christian Church, ever since its first establishment, the Books containing the principles of the Religion itself, are come down to us who live at the distance of nearly eighteen Centuries from the time of their Authors, in a pure and unadulterated condition: so that whenever the Christian faith has been corrupted, its deviation from a state of purity could always be detected by an appeal to the most indisputable authority. Nor has the stream of time merely conveyed to us this divine treasure, uninjured and secure; but even in the midst of the most violent persecutions, and the darkest superstition, the Christian faith has been so protected by divine care, that it has never been wholly lost to the world. Some believers in every age have had the courage, like their divine Master, to witness a good confession, and let the light of their example shine before their depraved contemporaries.

II. *The Character of our Lord.*

This character, as represented in the plain and energetic narratives of the Evangelists, is marked by qualities the most extraordinary, and the most transcendent. Every account of every other personage, whether portrayed by the fancy of the

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the poet, or described by the accuracy of the historian, leaves it evidently without an equal, in the history of mankind.

If the conduct of those who bear a resemblance to Christ as the founders of religious establishments be examined, these assertions will receive the fullest confirmation. They all accommodated their plans to human policy, and private interest—to existing tenets of superstition, and to prevailing habits of life. The Christian Lawgiver, more sublime in his object, and more pure in his motives, aimed at no recommendation of his precepts by courting the prejudices, or flattering the passions of mankind. The institutions of Numa the second King of the Romans, of Brama the Lawgiver of the various tribes of India, and of Confucius the great Philosopher of China, were evidently adapted to the existing habits, and prevailing inclinations of their people. They seem indeed to have been founded altogether upon them. Mahomet, the great impostor of Arabia, suited the rules of his Koran, and the rewards of his paradise, to the manners and desires of a warlike and a sensual people. In his character and conduct he presented a striking contrast to Christ. Ambition and lust were his reigning passions. He maintained, that he received his Koran from heaven: but its frivolous and absurd contents sufficiently indicate the falsehood of his pretensions. With a degree of effrontery still more impious, he pleaded a divine authority for the boundless gratification of his sensuality:
and

and unable to appeal to miracles which give the most certain proofs of a teacher sent from God, he extended his faith by force, and reared his bloody crescent amid captives, who were the victims of his passions, and cities that were desolated by his sword^h.

In

^h The contrast between our Lord and the Prophet of Arabia is drawn in a style of such rich and appropriate eloquence by Archbishop Sherlock, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of presenting it to my readers.

“ Make the appeal to natural religion, or, which is the same thing, to the reason of man. Set before her Mahomet, and his disciples, arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands and tens of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword. Shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements; shew her the prophet's chamber, his wives and concubines; let her see his adulteries, and hear him alledge revelation and his divine commission to justify his lust and oppression. When she is tired with this scene, then shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek; doing good to all the souls of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies; let her follow him to the mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to his God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured, but not provoked. Let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to the cross, and let her view him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*—When natural religion hath viewed both, ask her, which is the prophet of God?—But her answer, we have already heard, when

In the character of Christ we behold the most complete and prompt resignation to the will of God. So pure and so perfect was the whole tenour of his conduct, as to defy calumny, although it excited jealousy, and inflamed malice. His most bitter and inveterate enemies, even when suborned to be his public accusers, could not make good a single charge against his moral character. He was equally free from the ambition of an impostor, and the infatuation of an enthusiast; for when the people sought to place the crown of Israel on his head, he conveyed himself away by a miracle. Whenever he condescended to discourse upon any important point, or to answer any objections of his adversaries, he overcame their opposition with the irresistible power of truth, and his words were the words of unerring wisdom. Upon all occasions he displayed the soundness and moderation of calm judgment, and the steadiness of heroic intrepidity. There was no wild enthusiasm in his devotions, no rigid austerity in his conduct, no frivolous subtlety or intemperate vehemence in his arguments. Of all the virtues, which adorned his mind, and gave a restless grace and loveliness to every action of his life, humility, patience, and the most ardent and universal love of mankind, were, upon every

when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross; by him she spoke and said, *Truly this was the Son of God.*" Sherlock's Ninth Discourse, vol. i. See Paley's Evidences, vol. iii. p. 70; Taylor's Moral Demonstrations, vol. ii. p. 383; and Prideaux's Life of Mahomet,

occasion,

occasion, predominant. The perfect benevolence of his character, indeed, is fully evinced by the tendency of his miracles, which, far from being hurtful or vindictive, were directed to some beneficial end. His courage was equally remote from ostentation and from rashness, and his meekness and condescension never make him appear abject. Tried by the greatest afflictions of life, assailed by hunger, exposed to poverty, deserted by his friends, and condemned to suffer an ignominious death, he is never degraded; the greatness of his character is in no respect diminished—he preserves the same air of mildness and dignity, and appears in the same highly venerable light as the Saviour of the world, who submits to an ignoble station, and conceals his majesty in an humble garb, for the most important purposes. It is thus the glorious prospects of nature are sometimes enveloped in the mists of the morning; or the great luminary of day is deprived of his beams and his brightness, by the temporary darkness of an eclipse.

And here let us pause to admire the *manner* in which this most sublime of all characters is introduced to us. We are not left to form an idea of it from vague accounts or loose panegyric, but from actions and events; and this circumstance proves undeniably the veracity of the Biographers of our Lord. The qualities of his mind are displayed by a detail of actions, the more striking as they are more exact. All his actions are left to recommend themselves

themselves by their own intrinsic merit, to captivate by their unaffected beauty, and to shine by their native lustre. The Evangelists have nowhere professedly drawn an elaborate or highly finished character of the Saviour of the world. We are not told in a vague and indefinite manner, that he was eminently bountiful, compassionate, or wise. It is nowhere expressed in terms of general assertion, that he possessed the greatest virtues that can adorn and dignify the nature of man; or that he was endued with a power to control, or to counteract the general laws of nature. But these inferences we are fully enabled to draw from regular statements of facts. We learn from lively and affecting anecdotes distinctly and circumstantially related, among many other astonishing instances of his divine power, that with a portion of food, the most disproportionate to their wants, he satisfied the hungry multitudes in the wilderness, that he calmed the violence of a storm at a word, and raised the son of the widow to lifeⁱ.

Ignorant and illiterate as the Evangelists were, they have drawn a character superior to any that is elsewhere to be met with in the history of mankind. This character they were no less unable than unwilling to invent: the only method of solving this difficulty is to acknowledge that they wrote from the immediate impressions of reality. They saw, they conversed with the Saviour of mankind, and

ⁱ Matt. xiv. Mark iv. Luke vii.

heard from his sacred lips the words of eternal life. They felt the power of truth upon their minds, and they exhibited it with proportionable clearness and strength. To state well-known facts, and record the lessons of divine Revelation, were the great objects of their labours. Hence they were consistent as well as circumstantial and accurate; and their uniformity of representation is an additional proof of the *reality* of the person described, as their divine Master. Every particular is introduced in an artless and undefining manner; and this circumstance itself, of not bringing our Lord forward in an ostentatious point of view, affords a remarkable evidence to confirm the truth of the Gospels. To complete the perfection of his character, his conduct was the exact counterpart of his instructions. He presented to the world that lively image of moral perfection, which had indeed filled and elevated the imagination of Plato and Cicero; but which they as well as all other ancient philosophers in the widest circle of their observation had sought for in vain^k. The heavenly Teacher not only spoke as never man spoke, with respect to the sublime lessons, which he taught, the lively images, by which he illustrated, and the awful and impressive manner, in which he inculcated them; but at once to combine the efficacy of example with the perfection of precept, became the unerring guide to all that was

^k Formam quidem ipsam, & tanquam faciem honesti vides; quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plato, excitaret sapientiæ. Cicero de Officiis.

pious, all that was good, and all that was truly and intrinsically great.

Preserving the same character of dignity blended with mildness and affability, he accommodated himself to persons of every rank and condition. Among the wise and the learned, the Doctors of the Sanhedrim, the haughty Pharisees, and the sceptical Sadducees, how does he shine in detecting their malice, confuting their cavils against his conduct and precepts, and establishing clear and useful truths! Among the publicans and sinners, how does he disseminate the purest morality without unnecessary harshness! Among the low and illiterate, the fishermen of Galilee and the populace of Jerusalem, how does he condescend to their contracted understandings, and adapt his precepts to their habits of life. Even women and children, because considered as capable of that instruction which leads to eternal happiness, are particularly regarded by the universal Teacher of Mankind. *Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but for yourselves and your children*, was his benign address, when he wished to turn their attention from his own sufferings to the impending woes of their country. *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven*. In this various accommodation to high and low, young and old, can we be inattentive to a quality of our Saviour's mind, which is peculiarly calculated to attach every feeling heart to his service—do we not

remark that he was as *amiable*, as he was great and wise ¹?

He who reflects with due attention and reverence upon the dignity, purity, and holiness of this divine character, will be sensible of the great difficulty of doing justice to the subject, as the Saviour of the world is presented to our observation, in a manner so peculiarly striking. The inspired Evangelists and Apostles can alone satisfy our inquiries concerning him; and every other writer, conscious of his own incapacity to conceive, and his want of eloquence to describe such unparalleled excellence, must point to the lively and expressive portrait, which they alone, who saw the original, were qualified to draw.

It is reasonable to expect that so extraordinary a personage, distinguished as he was by every moral and intellectual quality, must necessarily make his testimony concerning himself perfectly credible. The positive and direct proofs of his divine mission are equally founded upon the prophecies, which foretold the most remarkable circumstances of his birth, life, and death, and upon the miracles by which he proved to demonstration, that he was the promised Messiah of the Jews, the Mediator of a new covenant between God and man, and a divine Teacher sent to reform and save a guilty world.

¹ Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature, Book IV.

III. *The Prophecies.*

The Old Testament contains a long series of predictions, which are expressed with greater distinctness, and marked with a more striking and appropriate reference to a particular train of events, in proportion as the Prophets approached more nearly to the time of the Messiah. As he was the great object of the general expectation of the Jews, so was he the great end of the Prophecies. Sometimes he is portrayed as the innocent, patient, and unrepining sufferer, pierced with grief, and sinking under unmerited calamity for the sake of mankind; *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, who hath borne our sorrows, and was wounded for our transgressions^m*; and sometimes, with all the fervour and vivid colours of Oriental poetry, are described his temporal grandeur, the transcendent attributes of his divine character, and the glory and eternity of his kingdom. *His name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peaceⁿ*. These surprising intimations that occur in the Prophets of various ages, like rays of light proceeding from different quarters, all meet in the same point, and illuminate the same object. Here is none of that latitude of interpretation, or ambiguity of expression, in which the oracles of the heathens were conveyed. The history of Christ, as related by the

^m Isaiah, liii.ⁿ Isaiah, ix. 6.

Evangelists, may be considered as an enlarged and finished copy of the Prophecies, and the Prophecies themselves as the original sketches. The proportions and the outlines are uniformly preserved, and faithfully delineated. The colours indeed are more distinct and glowing, the figures have their just animation, but still their character and expression are the same°. Ineffectual have been the endeavours of the Jews to pervert the true meaning of these Prophecies; their literal sense is peculiarly applicable to our Lord, and to him alone they must necessarily be referred. Without mistaking their object, or perverting their clear and obvious sense, they cannot be applied to any other person whatever. Whilst these predictions strike the mind of an attentive reader of Scripture, with various degrees of evidence, there are some of them which cannot fail to impress him with the fullest conviction, as they immediately relate to the mission, miracles and character, as well as the exact time of the coming of Christ. Isaiah and Daniel more especially seem rather to describe the past as Historians, than to anticipate the future as Prophets. We know, from the authority of Scripture, that multitudes of Jews, who had diligently studied the Prophecies from their youth, and acknowledged

° Stillingfleet's *Orig. Sacrae*, book ii. ch. v. &c. Paley's *Evidences*, vol. ii. p. 67. Grotius *de Veritate*, lib. v. c. 17, 18. Jortin's *Remarks*, vol. i. p. 73, 74. Prideaux's *Connexions*, vol. ii. p. 161. Josephus *de Bello Judaico*, lib. vi. c. 4. sect. 5, 6, 7, 8. compared with the predictions that relate to the Temple, as recorded by the Evangelists.

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their divine authority, felt the force of their application to our Lord, and were converted to his religion. And not to appeal to other instances, we also know that the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, so circumstantially descriptive of the suffering Messiah, effected the conversion of the Eunuch of Ethiopia, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and contributed greatly to produce a conviction of the truth of Christianity in the mind of the profligate Lord Rochester^p.

The books, which contain these Prophecies, have been most carefully preserved even by the enemies of Christianity. Such are the Jews, whose religious belief is founded upon an acknowledgment of the divine inspiration of the Prophets. Hence they are undesignedly the supporters of that faith, to which they are confessedly hostile. A wide difference of opinion has prevailed among them in various ages; for their interpretations of the Prophets, before the coming of the Messiah, agreed much better with those of the Christians, than any they have given since the establishment of Chris-

^p This fact is recorded by Bishop Burnet. "To him Lord Rochester laid open with great freedom the tenor of his opinions, and the course of his life, and from him he received such conviction of the reasonableness of moral duty, and the truth of Christianity, as produced a total change both of his manners and opinions. The account of those salutary conferences is given by Burnet in a book, intituled, *Some passages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester*; which the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety." *Johnson's Life of Rochester*, vol. iv. p. 6. 12mo.

tianity. And it is very much to the purpose repeatedly to take notice, that whatever construction they have put upon the *words* of the Prophecies, they have never raised any doubt, or brought any arguments to invalidate their *authenticity*.

As the divine mission of Christ received such support from the Prophecies, of which he was the subject; so it is very strongly confirmed by those events, which he foresaw and foretold. He clearly described the *manner* of his own death, with many particular circumstances—the *place* where it was ordained to happen—the *treacherous method* by which he was to be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish governors, and given up to the Roman power—the *cruel* and *unbecoming treatment* he was to suffer, and the *exact period* of time that should elapse from his death to his resurrection. Such was precisely the train of events, as they are related at large by the Evangelists, and as those events were attested by the full acknowledgment and confession of the first martyrs, who sealed their belief with their blood. The Saviour of mankind speaks of future events without hesitation, not as things merely probable, but absolutely certain. He does not shadow them out in vague and ambiguous terms; but marks them in their rise, progress, and effects, in the clearest and most circumstantial descriptions. His penetrating eye pierces the veil of futurity, and the distant allusions of the Prophet are, as it were, converted into the prospect of the spectator. Even at the time when Judea was in complete subjection
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to the Roman power, when a strong garrison kept its capital in awe, and a rebellion against their conquerors, who had at that time the command of the world, appeared as improbable as it was fruitless; he deplored the fall of the holy city, and pointed out the advance of the Roman standard, as the token of desolation, and the signal for his followers to save themselves by flight, from captivity and destruction. At the time too when the temple of Jerusalem was held in the highest veneration by all foreigners, as well as Jews, what were the immediate observations of our Lord, when his disciples directed his attention, in terms of wonder and astonishment, to the vast and solid materials, of which that magnificent edifice was built? He lamented its approaching fall, and declared in the plainest words, that so complete should be its demolition, *that not one stone should be left upon another.* At a time likewise when the number of his followers was limited to a few fishermen of Galilee, and when he seemed destitute of every means to accomplish his purpose, he predicted the wide diffusion of the faith, and expressly proclaimed, that before the threatened calamities overwhelmed the Jews, and subverted their empire, *this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come*^a.

^a See "History the Interpreter of Prophecy," 5th Edit. for the illustration of this subject at large; a work to which I refer with the less reserve, as the public have received it with approbation.

The events, which happened about thirty years after the ascension of our Lord, completely verified these Prophecies. From the books of the New Testament, and particularly from the Acts of the Apostles, may be collected the fullest instances of the diligence and zeal, with which the new religion was in a short time diffeminated, and extended.

But Christians can appeal to an independent train of witnesses—to Jewish and to prophane authors, for circumstantial accounts of the fulfilment of our Lord's predictions. The historian Flavius Josephus, descended from the family, which bore the sacred office of High Priest, a distinguished general in the early part of the last Jewish war, has given a particular and exact confirmation of every circumstance. With singular care he has avoided to mention the name of Christ, and yet with singular precision he has illustrated his predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem. The important service he has thus rendered to Christianity is wholly unintentional. What he relates is drawn from him by the power of irresistible truth, and is a testimony far stronger, and more unexceptionable, than an explicit mention of the name of Christ, or a laboured encomium on his words and actions would have been.

The curious details of Josephus, in his History of the Wars of the Jews, are confirmed by Tacitus, Philostratus,

Philostratus, and Dion Cassius. It is probable they were all unacquainted with the works of the Jewish Historian ; and yet they corroborate his account, and all unite to illustrate the Prophecies of our Lord.

IV. *The Miracles of our Lord.*

The most illustrious evidence of the divine origin of Christianity, and that evidence to which its great Author most confidently appealed, when called upon to prove the authority of his mission, consisted in the exercise of miraculous powers. The miracles of Christ were so *frequent*, that they could not be the effects of chance ; so *public*, that they could not be the contrivance of fraud and imposture ; so *instantaneous*, that they could not result from any preconcerted scheme ; and so *beneficial* in their immediate consequences, and so conducive to propagate the salutary truths he taught, that they could not proceed from the agency of evil spirits. They must therefore have been effected by the interposition of that divine power, to which Christ himself attributed them. Our Lord did not come according to the expectation of many of the Jews, as the conqueror of their enemies, to display his policy in council, and his courage in the field : but he was invested with powers, that enabled him to triumph over the works of darkness, and suspend the laws of nature. The frequent and public exercise of those powers was essential to his character as a teacher sent from

from God, so that miracles were the fullest and most satisfactory credentials of his divine mission'.

This divine Personage, whose manifestation to the world was preceded by such a regular train of prophecies; who instantaneously cured inveterate diseases, and at whose word even the dead arose; whose mind was adorned with consummate wisdom, and whose conduct was distinguished by every virtue; descended from heaven to deliver a perfect rule of faith and practice, and taught those important and indispensable lessons of duty, which are essentially necessary to the present and future happiness of mankind.

*V. Christian Ethics,
Or the Precepts of our Lord.*

The precepts of Christianity form the most complete, most intelligible, and most useful system of Ethics, or moral philosophy. The standard of duty, which is set up in the Gospel, is agreeable to our natural notions of the Supreme Being, and is calculated to correct our errors, exalt our affections, purify our hearts, and enlighten our understand-

“ The evidence of our Saviour's mission from heaven is so great, in the multitude of miracles he did, before all sorts of people, (which the divine providence and wisdom has so ordered, that they never were, nor could be denied by any of the enemies and opposers of Christianity) that what he delivered cannot but be received as the oracles of God.” Locke.

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ings. The powerful motives, by which Christ enforces the practice of his laws, are correspondent to the expectations of accountable beings. And the system which these laws compose, is the only one ever delivered, which is calculated to instruct the great mass of mankind, high and low, rich and poor, with all authority as to its origin, and with the most salutary effect as to their conduct. The system bears the marks of its own internal evidence as coming from God, because it is in every respect consistent with his wisdom and goodness.

To view the moral part of the Christian dispensation in a proper light, it ought to be compared with the principles of ancient Philosophy. The sages of Greece and Rome undoubtedly present us with the most convincing proofs how far unenlightened reason could advance in the examination of moral obligation, and the discovery of the duties of man. But imperfection, if not error, was attached to all their systems.

If moral wisdom descended from heaven to dwell with Socrates, the most enlightened sage of the heathen world, she quickly caught the contagion of earthly depravity, and forgot her dignity so far as

“ In morality there are books enough writ both by ancient and modern philosophers ; but the morality of the Gospel doth so exceed them all, that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I shall send him to no other book, but the New Testament.” Locke on Reading and Study, vol. ii. p. 407.

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to bend at the shrine of superstition. Her dictates were not built upon any certain foundations, or digested into a consistent plan. They were disgraced with false notions, intermixed with frivolous refinements, and scattered among discordant sects. Each sect of philosophers had a different idea of happiness, and a different mode of investigating truth. The Epicureans maintained that happiness consisted in pleasure, the Stoics held that virtue was the only good, and the Peripatetics that it was the greatest good. Every school was distinguished by its particular opinions; and the followers of Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno, exerted the powers of their minds rather to display their ingenuity, than to satisfy the inquiries of mankind, as to the nature, the principles, and the end of moral obligation. The powerful influence of example, and the strong and awakening voice of some great and divine Teacher, were requisite to give to their instructions the energy of law. But the most material obstacle to a ready compliance with the dictates of heathen morality, was the want of such *sanctions* or confirmations by divine authority, as are calculated to hold the mind of man in constant obedience, by an immediate appeal to his hopes and fears—to his desire of future happiness, and his dread of future misery in a world to come.

And do we not find, that our holy Religion not only contains the best precepts of ancient philosophy in one regular system, but adds to them others
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which are peculiarly and eminently her own? Certainly. And this shews its high degree of perfection. To the Gospel of Christ we are indebted for those rules of conduct, which enjoin the sacrifice of self-interest, selfish pleasures, and vain-glory. By it alone we are taught in the most explicit language, and in the most authoritative manner, to check all violent passions, and to cultivate the mild and pure affections of the heart, to forgive injuries, to love our enemies, to resist the first impulse of evil desires, to practise humility and universal benevolence, and to prefer the joys of heaven to the pleasures and occupations of the world. Advancing to a degree of improvement far beyond the lessons of heathen morality, far beyond what was ever taught under the porches of Athens, or in the groves of the Academy; we are instructed to entertain the most awful veneration for the Deity; and to express the most lively gratitude for his mercies;—we are supported by the firmest reliance on his grace, and we are invited upon all occasions to resort in earnest and fervent prayers to his power, mercy, and goodness, for the supply of our numerous wants, for the pardon of our sins, for security in the midst of danger, and for support at the hour of death.

Having a perfect model of virtue in the conduct of our blessed Lord set before us, and a perfect rule of life proposed in his divine instructions, we are taught to expect that our sincere endeavours to conquer the difficulties we have to surmount in
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our journey through life will be aided by the divine grace; and we are encouraged to hope that by our strenuous and unabating exertions we may make a much nearer approach to that perfection of character, which reaches “the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ,” than it is possible for those to do, who act not upon Christian principles^t.

Consider

* “The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest, by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest *perfection*.” Milton.

“And is it then possible that mortal man should in any sense attain unto *perfection*? Is it possible, that we who are born in sin, and conceived in iniquity, who are brought forth in ignorance, and grow up in a multiplicity of errors; whose understandings are dark, our wills biased, our passions strong, our affections corrupted, our appetites inordinate, our inclinations irregular—Is it possible, that we who are surrounded with things themselves obscure, with examples evil, with temptations numberless, as the variety of objects that encompass us—Is it possible, that *we* should make any progress towards arriving at perfection? With men indeed this must needs be impossible; but with God all things are possible. For when we consider on the other side, that we have a perfect rule, and an unerring instructor; an example complete as the divine life, and yet with all the condescensions of human infirmity; motives strong and powerful as the rewards of heaven, and pressing as the necessity of avoiding endless destruction; assistances mighty as the grace of God, and effectual as the continual guidance of the Spirit of truth; when we consider this, I say, we may then perhaps be as apt to wonder on the other hand, that all men are not perfect. And yet with all these advantages, the perfection,

Consider the precepts of Christianity not by comparison only with other systems, but as furnishing a rule of life. Were the actions of mankind to be regulated by them, nothing would be wanting to render us happy. Peace and harmony would flourish in every part of the globe. There would be no injustice, no impiety, no fraud, no rapine, no reign of disorderly passions. Every one, satisfied with his lot, resigned to the divine will, and enjoying a full prospect of endless happiness, would pass his days in content and tranquillity to which neither pain nor sorrow, nor even the fear of death, could ever give any long interruption. Man would renew his primeval condition, and in his words and actions exhibit the purity of Paradise. That such a state, as far as the imperfection of human nature would allow, can exist, we trust that the lives of many Christians, not only of the primitive but of subsequent times, can attest. Surely such a system must be transcendent in excellence, and bears within itself the marks of a divine origin."

The revealed will of God is the proper source of moral obligation. It gives life and vigour to the performance of every duty, and without it all systems of morals are dry, uninteresting, and founded upon no fixed principle of action. How jejune and

perfection, that the best men ever arrive to, is but in a figurative and very imperfect sense, with great allowances, and much diminution, with frequent defects, and many, very many limitations."

Clarke, Sermon cxliv. vol. ii. p. 183. fol. edit.

tedious are the Ethics of Aristotle, and the Offices of Cicero, the writings of Pufendorf and Grotius, of Whitby and Hutcheson, when compared with the short rules, illustrated by the most pleasing families, and animated by the most striking examples, with which the Gospel of Christ abounds! His divine lessons touch the heart by the affecting combination of practice with theory, and even engage the passions on the side of virtue.

Men who are distinguished by great and extraordinary talents are remarked to have usually a peculiar mode of thinking, and expression. Whoever examines the discourses of our Lord with care, will find in them a certain character which discriminates them from the lessons of all other moralists. His manner at once original and striking, clear and convincing, consists in deriving topics of instruction from objects and circumstances familiar to his hearers. He affects the passions, and improves the understanding, through the medium of the senses. His public lessons to the people, and his private conversations to his disciples, allude perpetually to the *place* where he was, to the *surrounding* objects, the *season* of the year, or to the *occupations* and *circumstances* of those whom he addresses. When he exhorted his disciples to trust in Providence for the supply of their daily wants, he bade them behold the fowls of the air, which were then flying around them, and were fed by divine bounty, although they did not sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He desired them to observe the lillies of the field which

which were then blooming, and were beautifully clothed by the same power, and yet toiled not like the husbandman, whom they then saw at work. When the woman of Samaria was surprised at his asking her for water, he took occasion to represent his doctrine under the image of living water which flows from a spring. When he approached the temple, where sheep were kept in folds to be sold for the sacrifices, he spake in parables of the shepherd, the sheep, and the door of the sheep-fold. At the sight of little children, he recommended their innocence and simplicity as the qualities necessary to adorn the candidates for his kingdom of heaven. When he cured the man who was born blind, he immediately referred to himself as the light of the world. He often alluded to the occupation of some of his disciples, whom he appointed fishers of men. Knowing that Lazarus was dead, and should be raised again, he discoursed concerning the awful truths of the general resurrection, and of life eternal^u.

“ Many writers upon the subject of moral philosophy divide too much the law of nature from the precepts of Revelation; which appears to me much the same defect, as if a commentator on the laws of England should content himself with stating upon each head the common law of the

^u Jortin's Discourses, p. 229. Mat. vi. 26, 28. John iv. 10. x. 1. Mark ix. 37. John ix. 39. Matt. iv. 10. xiii. 47. John xi. 25. For some very pleasing remarks on our Lord's manner of teaching, see Dr. Townson's Discourses, p. 279.

land, without taking any notice of acts of Parliament: or should choose to give his readers the common law in one book, and the statute law in another. When the obligations of morality are taught, (says Dr. Johnson in the Preface to the Preceptor) let the sanctions of Christianity never be forgotten; by which it will be shewn that they give strength and lustre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reason; and morality the will of God^{*}.

From this view of the subject appears the excellence of the morality of the Gospel, and consequently how unnecessary it is to resort to any other scheme of Ethics for a rule of action. The various plans of duty, which have been formed exclusive of Christianity, seem not to propose any *motives* sufficiently cogent and permanent, to withhold men from the gratification of vicious desires, and the indulgence of violent passions. They must therefore give place to a more perfect law, which has the best claims to general reception, because it is founded on the express Revelation of the Will of the Creator, and Governor of the world, to his dependent and accountable creatures.

^{*} Paley's Preface to his Moral and Political Philosophy.

VI. *The rapid and extensive propagation of the Gospel at its first preaching.*

Of all the proofs, which are adduced to establish the truth of Christianity, there is no one more splendid than that which arises from the rapid and extensive propagation of the Gospel; and this proof will appear very strong if it be considered as the fulfilment of a long train of Prophecies. Far from being intimidated by the opposition, the enmity, or even the most severe and bloody persecutions of a hostile world, the Apostles readily obeyed the commands of their Divine Master, and declined no hardships and avoided no dangers, in order to make converts. The effect of their labours was in a very short time visible in every country, to which they directed their steps. The rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the polished natives of Italy and Greece, as well as the rude inhabitants of the most uncivilized countries, enlisted under the banner of the Cross. The most ancient and most popular establishments of religion, which had ever been known in the world, gradually gave way to the new faith. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian forsook their temples, consecrated by the veneration of ages to idolatrous worship, and repaired in crowds to the Christian assemblies; and at the close of only three centuries from its origin, the faith of the lowly Jesus of Nazareth was embraced by Constantine, the

Sovereign of the Roman world, and throughout the wide compass of his dominions it was raised to all the privileges and dignity of an established religion.

For the clearest proofs of these facts we may appeal not only to the animated details of those early Christian Writers, commonly called the Fathers of the Church, who expressed themselves in terms of great exultation at the prospect of this wide diffusion of the faith; but to a number of Pagans who were strongly prejudiced against the Christian cause, or were enemies to its advancement. The successive accounts of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Eusebius and Chrysostom, who were all eminent writers in the Church, are confirmed by the express declarations of Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, Lucian, and Porphyry, all of whom were Pagans, and lived within three centuries from the time of Christ,

If the circumstances of discouragement and danger, under which the faith of Christ made so extraordinary a progress, be more distinctly enumerated, we shall more properly estimate the value of the argument drawn from the rapid propagation of Christianity, when it was first proclaimed to the world.

Most

y Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 30. vol. iii. p. 94. For a concise and accurate account of the progress of Christianity, and the labours of its first preachers, see Paley, vol. i. c. 4, 5. He

makes

Most of the Apostles were not only persons of low education, ignoble birth, and destitute of every distinction to recommend them to the notice and favour of the world; but were exposed to the slander and malice of their countrymen, for their attachment to Christ, and held in detestation by the natives of other places, by reason of their Jewish extraction and manners. They went forth to discharge their duty, as the missionaries of their divine Master, at a time when the world was enlightened by learning and science; when philosophy was cultivated in the schools of Greece, and general knowledge was diffused over many of the places, which were the principal scenes of their labours, sufferings, and triumphs. The wiles of imposture, and the artifices of falsehood could not long have escaped the detection of such inquisitive, intelligent, and enlightened people, as flourished in that age. The Apostles and their converts were exposed to the taunts of derision, and the cruelties of persecution; and they risked the loss not only of liberty and character, of friends and relations, but even of life itself, for the profession of their new faith. Kings, Priests, and Magistrates were leagued against them, as they were falsely represented to be the abettors of dangerous innovations,

But all these obstacles, as they would make a comparison between the first preachers of the Gospel and the modern missionaries; from the slow and inconsiderable progress made by the latter, in comparison with the rapid and extensive success of the former, he proves the divine origin of Christianity. This argument is fully stated, and conducted with peculiar strength and perspicuity, vol. iii. p. 50. sect. 2.

and the disturbers of public order and tranquillity. They proclaimed a system adverse no less to the established religion, than to the dearest hopes of the Jews, as they expected a triumphant Messiah from heaven, to deliver them from temporal distress, and restore the glory of their fallen kingdom. They looked with contempt on the disciples of Christ, who had suffered the punishment of a common malefactor. When the Apostles preached the Gospel to the Gentile world, they proposed no union of the principles of Christianity with the rites of Polytheism; but, on the contrary, boldly asserted the necessity of overthrowing every altar of every idol, and of establishing the exclusive worship of the one true God. Such was the nature of their plain declarations at the particular time, when the people of every country were strongly attached to their ancient and revered establishments of religion, which charmed the eye with the magnificent processions and ceremonies, and gratified the passions with licentious festivals. Thus the power and authority of the great, the interests of the priests, and the passions and prejudices of the bulk of mankind, were all engaged in open hostility against the preachers of the new religion, and seemed for ever likely to exclude the admission of Christianity. But all these obstacles, irresistible as they would have been by exertions merely human, gradually yielded to the unexceptionable testimony, which the first missionaries bore to the character, actions, and resurrection of their Lord and Master,—to the evidence of miracles, which they were enabled to perform,—and to the power of divine truth.

CHAPTER II.

The Subject continued.

THE Christian religion, even attended, as we have seen it was, with the most striking proofs of its divine origin, was no sooner proclaimed to the world, than it met with those who cavilled at its doctrines, and opposed its progress. It was too pure in its nature, and too sublime in its objects, to suit the gross conceptions of some men; and its divine Author erected too perfect a standard of duty to suit the depraved inclinations and unruly passions of others. We are therefore the less surprised to find, that it has from the earliest ages been assailed by many enemies. As its followers were at first exposed to the severest trials of persecution; so have they, in succeeding ages, been obliged to defend themselves against the attacks of misapplied learning, and the cavils of ingenious sophistry. Writers neither destitute of diligence nor acuteness have attempted, in various ages, to acquire reputation in this unhappy cause. The most prominent and striking circumstance which must be remarked by every candid examiner of their works, from the days of Julian the apostate to those of Gibbon the infidel historian, is: that they have frequently incurred the same censure, which they have bestowed with an unsparing hand upon others;

others; for at the same time, that they have not scrupled to reprobate in the severest terms the intemperate zeal of the advocates for the faith, they have displayed as much, or probably more vehemence and pertinacity, in their own cause.

In each successive age since the origin of Christianity, every kind of attack has been levelled against it, which the wit of Man could dictate; sometimes it has been assailed by open arguments, sometimes by disingenuous insinuations; frequently has metaphysical subtlety endeavoured to undermine it, and frequently the sneer of sarcasm, and the effrontery of ridicule, have been directed against its sacred institutions, and its most sincere and serious professors. But much as unbelievers of every description may have asserted their claims to superiority over ignorant minds, or much as they may have imagined they soared above vulgar prejudices, they have never remained long unanswered, or unrefuted. As often as infidels have waged war against the faith, and fought with various weapons, so often have they been defeated and disarmed by able champions of Christianity.

“ Whilst the infidel mocks at the superstition of the vulgar, insults over their credulous fear, their childish errors and fantastic rites, it does not occur to him to observe, that the most preposterous device, by which the weakest devotee ever believed he was securing the happiness of a future

future life, is more rational than unconcern about it. Upon this subject nothing is so absurd as indifference, no folly so contemptible as thoughtlessness and levity^a."

Modern unbelievers may have reason to boast of the boldness of their attacks, but little of the *originality* of their arguments, since the cavils of Voltaire^b, and his Followers, newly pointed as they may be with wit, or urged as they may be with additional vehemence, can be traced to Julian, Porphyry and Celsus, the ancient enemies of the church. Some who dislike the toil of investigating truth for themselves, eagerly take advantage of the labours of others; and lay great stress upon the example of those eminent men, who have dis-

^a Paley's Moral Philosophy, p. 391.

^b "Voltaire's pen was fertile and very elegant, his observations are very acute, yet he often betrays great ignorance when he treats on subjects of ancient learning. Madame de Talmond once said to him, "I think, Sir, that a philosopher should never write but to endeavour to render mankind less wicked and unhappy than they are. Now you do quite the contrary. You are always writing against that Religion which alone is able to restrain wickedness, and to afford us consolation under misfortunes." Voltaire was much struck, and excused himself by saying, That he only wrote for those who were of the same opinion as himself. Tronchin assured his friends that Voltaire died in great agonies of mind. "I die forsaken by Gods and Men," exclaimed he in those awful moments, when truth will force its way. "I wish," added Tronchin, "that those who had been perverted by his writings had been present at his death. It was a sight too horrid to support."

Seward's Anec. V. 5. p. 274.

believed,

believed, or rather in some instances perhaps only affected to disbelieve, the fundamental truths of Christianity. The Christian professes not to deny the force of such an argument, because he is aware, that the weight of authority is very powerful, whether avowed or concealed. It undoubtedly gives a bias to the mind, which is more commonly felt than acknowledged; and it has considerable influence in determining the judgment in most of the affairs of life. If however this argument be urged in opposition to Christianity, fair reasoning requires that it should be allowed due force in its favour. Ask an infidel, who are the leaders, under whose banners he has enlisted himself, and perhaps he will refer you to Bolingbroke, and to Hume: but surely, if even we allow the elegance and acuteness of the one, and the florid declamation of the other, all the praise they deserve, they can never bear a competition with those luminaries of science, and those teachers of genuine wisdom, who have not only embraced the Christian faith, but maintained its truth and divine origin, and directed their conduct by its rules. They can never be weighed in the balance of merit, against advocates of Christianity, so dispassionate, sincere, ingenuous, and acute, so divested of all objections, that can be drawn from interested attachments, as Milton, Clarendon, Hale, Boyle, Bacon, Locke, Newton, Addison, Lyttleton, West, and Johnson^c.

Ought

^c The list of those on whom *no motive* but a love of truth, and a regard for their own salvation, operated to induce them to

Ought not the testimony, which such men as these have given, to be held in the highest estimation? A testimony founded not upon any surrender of their judgments to the prevailing opinions of the day, but upon close and patient examination of the evidences of Christianity, of which their writings give the most satisfactory proofs. Or are such men to be undervalued, when brought into comparison with the infidels of modern times? Where do we find persons of such profound understandings, and inquisitive minds, as Bacon, Locke, and Newton; where of such a sublime genius as Milton; where of such various and extensive learning; embracing all the treasures of eastern, as well as western literature, as Sir William Jones, who at the close of life recorded his conviction of the truth of divine Revelation, and celebrate the excellence of the holy Scriptures? To compare the race of modern infidels in point of genius, learning, science, judgment, or love of truth;—to compare Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, Godwin and Paine, with such men as these, were surely as idle, and as absurd, as to compare the weakness of infancy with the maturity of manhood; the flutter of a butterfly with the

to embrace Christianity, may be greatly enlarged; more particularly by adverting to many characters of the first eminence, distinguished in other countries. To the illustrious names of Savile, Selden, Hatton, Mead, Steele, Dugdale, Nelson, Littleton, as well as those included in my list, may be added those of Salmasius, Grotius, Pascal, Pufendorf, Erasmus, Montesquieu, and Haller. I am sensible of the great imperfections of this detail.

soaring

soaring of an eagle; or the twinkling of a star with the glory of the sun, illuminating the universe with his meridian brightness.

It is well remarked, by an elegant and sensible writer, who could have no professional bias to influence his opinions, that, “The clergy are both ready and able to maintain the cause of Christianity, as their many excellent writings in defence of it sufficiently demonstrate: but as the generality of mankind is more governed by prejudice than reason, their writings are not so universally read, or so candidly received, as they deserve; because they are supposed to proceed, not from conscience and conviction, but from interested views, and the common cause of their profession—A supposition evidently as partial and injurious as that would be, which should impute the gallant behaviour of our officers to the mean consideration of their pay, and their hopes of preferment; exclusive of all the nobler motives of gentlemen; viz. the sense of honour, and the love of their country^d.”

Against the authority of such insidious writers, as Voltaire and Gibbon, we enter our serious, and we think our equitable protest; we exhort every one to beware of their sophistry, and to guard against their delusive arts. They have violated the laws of fair controversy, and fought with the weapons that cannot be allowed on such occasions.

^d West on the Resurrection.

They employ ridicule instead of argument, artful insinuation instead of serious discussion, and bold assertion instead of proof. They write to the passions and imagination, and not to the judgment of mankind. They artfully involve the questions relative to the evidences of Christianity in perplexity, and endeavour to throw the blame arising from the dissensions and usurpations, the vices and ignorance of some of the clergy, and the injury, which in dark and superstitious times was done to the liberties of mankind, upon Christianity itself. They select those topics, which can best be turned to their purpose, by the arts of misrepresentation; they embellish them with the flowery ornaments of style, and skilfully adapt them to the passions and prejudices of their readers. As however their conduct is thus artful, so ought their labours to be vain; for they do not try the cause upon its own merits: they do not, like candid and dispassionate reasoners, separate the subject in dispute from all foreign and extraneous circumstances: they do not agitate questions, and start objections, from a desire of being well informed: they do not, in the spirit of true philosophy, examine the evidences of Christianity with the seriousness, which is due to an affair of such infinite importance to the present welfare, and future happiness of mankind: they do not consider, that the same unbelief, if applied to the common records of history, or the ordinary affairs of life, would expose them to the imputation of extreme rashness and folly. As their conduct is evidently not dictated by a love of truth,
their

their scoffs, their sarcasms, and their sophistry, deserve no attention; and as they not only wantonly reject, but industriously depreciate the best gift of heaven, they ought to be shunned and reprobated, as enemies to the dearest interests of mankind^e.

And they certainly ought to be so considered, whether we observe the baleful influence of their opinions upon our present, or our future state. By a strange perversion of reason and argument, some of the Philosophists in France, and Godwin in England, have laboured to subvert the regular order of nature^f. Instead of representing the exercise of the private affections, as preparatory to that of public virtue, they set the one in direct opposition to the other. They propose to build *universal philanthropy* upon the ruins of *individual benevolence*, and tell us we must love our whole

^e “I am no advocate for the abject prostration of the devotee, or the frantic ecstasies of the fanatic. But there is a superstition, says the immortal Bacon, in shunning superstition; and he that disdains to follow religion in the open and the trodden path, may chance to lose his way in the trackless wilds of experiment, or in the obscure labyrinths of speculation.” Parr on Education, p. 24.

^f For this train of observation, as far as p. 68, I am indebted to “Modern Infidelity considered,” in a Sermon preached at the Baptist Meeting at Cambridge, by R. Hall, A.M. Considering the sound arguments of this writer, recommended by great eloquence and zeal in the cause of Christianity, I am inclined to exclaim, “*talis cum sit, utinam noster effet.*” See p. 57, &c.

species

species *more*, at the same time they direct us to love every individual of it *less*. In pursuit of this chimerical project, which, to the shame and disgrace of this country, has found advocates in England, as well as in France, gratitude, humility, conjugal, parental, and filial affection, together with all the lovely train of domestic virtues, are ridiculed and degraded, as too low and vulgar for the attention of enlightened philosophers; virtue is confined solely to a certain vague and enthusiastic ardour for the general good, and the affections for the social circle in which we live are violently transferred to distant countries and unknown multitudes. But surely it is natural to inquire, when all the common charities are thus deadened and destroyed, when the flame that communicates its genial warmth and brightness to social life is extinguished, and all the ties that now bind man to man are torn asunder by the hand of the modern Philosophists—surely it is natural to inquire from whence is this ardent affection for the general good to spring? And when they have completed their work of insensibility, or rather of infatuation; when they have taught their disciple to look with perfect indifference upon his nearest connexions; when he has estranged himself from his friends, insulted his benefactors, and silenced the voice of gratitude, pity, and charity, will he be better prepared for the love of his species? Will he become a true philanthropist, in proportion as he labours to suppress the feelings, and neglects the duties of a parent and a friend? Rather may

we not conclude with certainty, that in this attempt to revive a species of Stoicism, and to banish all the feelings which soften, humanize, and refine our hearts, that selfishness, moroseness, and cold and sullen apathy will assume the empire of the soul, and sink the human character to the lowest state of degradation and wretchedness? Rather may we not be certain that under pretence of advancing the general and universal good—terms that are so indefinite as to be almost unintelligible, when applied to creatures of limited capacities like man, endued with limited powers, and moving in narrow spheres of action—terms belonging to an object to which imagination may give innumerable shapes—rather may we not be certain that he will be prepared for the breach of every duty, and the perpetration of every crime? But if those who indulge in these wild speculations, and thus sport with humanity as well as reason, were to examine the holy Scriptures, they would perceive that Revelation is in perfect harmony with the order of nature, which instructs us by our own feelings that universal benevolence is the last and most perfect fruit of the social affections. Such is the voice of nature, and such is the principle of ancient philosophy refined, enlarged, and perfected by Christianity. The solid arguments of the great Roman Orator, when reasoning upon this subject, in his Treatise on the Duties of Man, in which he comprises the wisdom of all former ages, coincide with the precepts of holy Writ. Thus do Reason and Revelation unite to confirm

confirm the order of Nature, which leads in all things from particulars to generals, from private to public affections, from the love of parents, brothers, and sisters, to those more extensive relations, which, beginning with our native place, extend to our country, and from thence proceeding, comprehend the vast society of the human race. An attempt to reverse this order is as absurd as to build without a foundation, to expect a copious and perennial stream after the source of a river has been exhausted, or to think to attain the height of science, without acquiring the first elements of knowledge.

From whatever causes the doubts and cavils of modern Infidels arise, whether from a desire to gain the reputation of superior sagacity, a love of novelty, an ambition to soar above vulgar notions, or the indulgence in such practices as are inconsistent with the purity of the Christian character; it is clear, they are imperfectly acquainted with the real nature of the religion itself, and the various proofs by which it is supported. They condemn not so much what they do not understand, as what they do not give themselves the trouble to investigate.

A due attention to ancient history might have a happy effect in removing their doubts, and preparing the way for their conversion. Let them inquire into the ignorance and depravity of the world, before the coming of Christ; the superstition,

stitution and cruelty of Pagan worship, and the insufficiency of philosophy, as a guide to moral excellence : let them consider, whether it was not highly probable, that under such circumstances an all-wise and an all-merciful Being would impart his will to mankind : let them ask themselves seriously, whether it is reasonable to conclude, that, after ages of ignorance of his true character, this all-wise and all-merciful Being would at length fix upon falsehood, and that alone, as they pretend Christianity to be, for the effectual method of making himself known to his creatures : and that what the honest and ardent exercise of reason by the wisest men, such as Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, was not permitted to accomplish, he should allow to be effected by fraud, delusion, and imposture^s. Let them proceed to examine the *leading facts* attending the origin and progress of Christianity ;—facts that rest entirely upon independent proofs to establish their truth ; such as the humble birth of our Lord, the sublime nature of his Gospel, absolutely irreconcilable with the prejudices of his countrymen, and extremely unpalatable to the Gentiles ; and more particularly the total want of all human aid to ensure its reception, and promote its success. The religion was first propagated when nearly all the nations of the ancient world were reduced under one government, and were, comparatively with the preceding times, in a state of tranquillity ; and when a more

^s Hall's Sermon, p. 48.

secure and more general intercourse took place between them, in consequence of the Roman power and civilization, *very recently* introduced. The Religion was embraced and professed by Constantine the Great, and thus acquired countenance and stability, after it had, *for a long time*, endured every species of examination and persecution, and *a very short time before* the Northern Barbarians overran the Empire. Do these very particular eras look like the effects of accident, tending as they do so directly to favour the rise and the establishment of the Gospel. And is it not utterly inconsistent with common sense to suppose that such favourable conjunctures were brought about by *human* means, when the powers of the world were decidedly hostile to the cause? Were unbelievers to apply their minds seriously to the subject, would they not, we may confidently ask, find these, and many other arguments tending to the same point? And might not their curiosity then lead them to extend their researches into all its direct and positive evidences?

Among other instances that might be mentioned, the conduct of Soame Jenyns, the author of "a View of the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion," gives us full authority to answer these questions in the affirmative. He has stated with great candour the progress of his conviction of the truth of Christianity; and makes his acknowledgments in its favour in a manner, which shews the strength and the effect of its evidences, when examined with care and attention.

“ Having some leisure, and more curiosity, I employed them both in resolving a question, which seemed to me of some importance—whether Christianity was really an imposture, or whether it is what it pretends to be, a revelation communicated to mankind by the interposition of supernatural power? On a candid inquiry, I soon found that the first was an absolute impossibility; and that its pretensions to the latter were founded on the most solid grounds. In the further pursuit of my examination, I perceived at every step new lights arising, and some of the brightest from parts of it the most obscure, but productive of the clearest proofs, because equally beyond the power of human artifice to invent, and human reason to discover. These arguments, which have convinced me of the divine origin of this Religion, I have put together, in as clear and concise a manner as I was able, thinking they might have the same effect upon others; and being of opinion, that if there were a few more good Christians in the world, it would be beneficial to themselves, and by no means detrimental to the public.”

The excellence of Christianity appears in nothing more than that in proportion to the care with which its sacred oracles are examined, the more strongly does the light of its truth shine upon the mind. The progress of Infidelity, and the apostasy of multitudes, naturally awaken our concern, and make us more than usually solicitous to caution the rising generation against the errors of those, who

with to mislead them, but is there any circumstance in these awful *signs of the times*, that should shake our faith, or excite our surprise, as if the *present crisis* was peculiarly alarming and unexpected? The attentive reader of the holy Scriptures may safely reply in the negative; since the actual condition of the world is precisely such as revelation gives us reason to expect. All the circumstances that mark the character and the conduct of Infidels; their turn for ridicule; their folly, and impatience of restraint; their licentiousness of conduct, and insatiable appetite for change; the snares they lay to catch the unwary; and their vain professions to free the world from slavery, whilst they are themselves the captives of sin, are drawn by the Prophets with such clearness and accuracy, that no one can mistake the resemblance.

In the Epistles of St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Jude, you may read an exact anticipation of that Philosophy, *falsely so called*, which was ordained to agitate and afflict the world, in these *latter or last times*. And thus, by examining the Prophetic Word of God, and comparing it with the present state of the world, you increase the Evidences of Christianity. The Free-thinkers of England, the Philosophists of France, and the Illuminati of Germany, the disciples of Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Weisshaupt, confirm the divine origin of the Scriptures, which they reject, and accomplish in a most exact and wonderful manner, the

predictions which are the subject of their contempt and ridicule ^b.

“ The probability that the gospel may be true, is inferred from the utter improbability that it should be false. It is like nothing of human contrivance. The perfection of its morality transcends the best efforts of human wisdom: the character of its Founder is far superior to that of a mere man: and it will not be said, that his Apostles can be compared to any other fishermen, or any other teachers that ever were heard of. The views displayed in the Gospel of the Divine dispensations, with respect to the human race, are such as before the commencement of our Saviour’s ministry had never entered into the mind of man. To believe all this to be a mere human fable requires a degree of credulity, which, in the ordinary affairs of life, would do a man little credit; it is like believing, that a first rate ship of war might have been the work and the invention of a childⁱ. ”

I. The Benefits resulting from Christianity.

Let the sincere inquirer after truth turn with aversion from such delusive guides, as the Infidel

^b See the “ Interpreter of Prophecy,” Vol. II. for a particular account of their pernicious errors.

ⁱ Beattie’s Evidence of the Christian Religion, v. i. p. 86.

writers either of ancient or modern times, and consider what are the benefits, which the prevalence of Christianity has actually conferred upon the world; and let him carefully estimate what permanent and substantial good, by the influence of its precepts, and the fulfilment of its promises, it is able at all times to produce.

The Christian Religion has triumphed over those practices, customs, and institutions, which in ancient times were a disgrace to the character of man. It has softened the horrors of war, and alleviated the treatment of prisoners. It has vindicated the rights of nature, by abolishing the cruel practice of exposing infants; and it has raised the character and the importance of women in society, and given greater dignity, permanency, and honour to the institution of marriage. It put a stop to the combats of gladiators, the favourite and barbarous amusements of the Romans; it banished the licentious conduct that disgraced the worship of the Pagan Deities, as well as totally extinguished the worship itself. It has abridged the labours of the mass of mankind, and procured for them one happy day in seven for the enjoyment of repose, and attention to the exercises of public devotion. All Christian countries, and more especially our own, abound with establishments for the relief of sickness and poverty, and the maintenance of helpless infancy, and decrepid age. It has triumphed over the slavery, that prevailed in every part of the Roman Empire, and pursues its glorious progress, in the
4
diminution

diminution of a similar state of misery and oppression, which has long disgraced the character of Europeans in the West Indies.

Thus has it in its general and combined effects exalted the character of man, by engrafting the purest affections, and the most sacred duties upon the stock of his natural desires, and most powerful instincts. It has provided the means of establishing a perfect harmony between the sensibilities of his nature, and the convictions of his reason, by the Revelation of its divine truths.

And, not to expatiate upon its mild and salutary effects upon the temper, the passions, and the general conduct of millions, who, although their names were never recorded in the pages of history, were more worthy and honourable members of society, and are infinitely more deserving the approbation of mankind, than all the ancient heroes who have sought renown by war, or all the modern sceptics who have aspired to fame by their opposition to the faith; we may enumerate, in addition to its extensive and various improvements, the refinement it has given to *manners*, and its beneficial influence upon the public judgment of *morals*. Mankind, no longer left a prey to ignorance, or to loose and fluctuating opinions, are furnished with a guide to which they can always resort, for principles of religion and rules of conduct. Hence the most illiterate and humble members of the Christian Church can form more true and accurate notions of the Deity, his attributes

attributes and providence, as well as a more rational notion of moral obligation, of virtue, and vice, and the final destination of man, than was ever reached by the ancient sages in the brightest days of Heathen Philosophy.

Christianity, far from being calculated for any political constitution in particular, is found to prosper and flourish under *every form* of government; it corrects the spirit of democracy, and softens the rigour of despotic power. An enlargement of mind, and superior intelligence, distinguish in a peculiar manner those nations that have embraced the faith, from those extensive portions of mankind, who fight under the banners of Mahomet, or adhere to the more pacific Institutes of Brama and Confucius. The inhabitants of the East groan under the oppressions of arbitrary power, and little can their religion contribute to alleviate the weight of their chains. The Mahometans more especially are marked by peculiar ignorance; and so far are they from being distinguished by the light of science, or the cultivation of useful knowledge, that they rarely adopt any foreign improvements, and even smother in its birth the spirit of liberal inquiry and research^k.

To Christian nations belong the exclusive cultivation of learning and science, and the most assiduous advancement of every useful and ornamental

^k White's Bampton Lect. Sermon. ix.

art. By them every faculty of the soul is called forth into action; no torpid indolence stops the bold career of their genius, or restrains the patient and effectual operations of their industry. Since the purity of religion was restored by the Reformation, every part of Christendom has caught the flame of emulation; general knowledge is widely diffused, and the character of a Christian, and more particularly that of a Protestant, is marked by a superior improvement of the intellectual powers.

II. *The Church of England.*

Our Church, which stands at the head of the Protestant Establishments, was, by the favour of divine Providence, purified from the corruptions of the See of Rome in the reign of Henry VIII. Her courageous and enlightened Reformers threw off the yoke of Papal supremacy and superstition, revived the image of the primitive Establishment, and restored the modes of worship, that had prevailed in the purest times of Christianity. This conformity has been celebrated by its own members at home, and its admirers abroad, as its most illustrious and distinguishing characteristic. The fundamental Articles of her Faith are strictly consistent with Scripture; her sacred edifices, divested of the gaudy decorations of Popish temples, are furnished only with those appendages which give dignity to public worship. Her devotional exercises, not confined to a foreign tongue, as is the case with the
Papal

Papal ritual, which is written in Latin, but intelligible to all, may be fairly pronounced superior to all other sacred compositions of human origin, for simplicity of language, fervour of piety, and evangelical tenour of sentiment. The orders of the Priesthood, consisting of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, deriving their origin from the Apostles themselves, are confirmed by the earliest usage, and are recommended by the great utility of clerical subordination. The Constitution of the State, in return for the alliance which it has formed with the Church, derives from the association additional security for the observance of the laws, and the preservation of order. The unmolested profession, and open exercise of their own particular worship, are allowed to Dissenters of all kinds. The prudent toleration, with which they are indulged, equally avoids the extremes of persecution, which cuts asunder the ties of charity, and of that unbounded freedom, which may convert religion into an engine of political mischief. Thus deservedly renowned for her institutions, and her modes of worship, the Church of England is as favourable to the cultivation of the mind, as to the advancement of pure Christianity; and the zeal of her sons for the promotion of her interests has never been more conspicuous, than their learning, their talents, and their virtues.

Conclusion.

To the prevalence of Christianity, the study of its records, and the institutions and establishments

to

to which it gave rise, modern times are indebted for the preservation of the invaluable remains of Grecian and Roman literature. When the barbarians of the North, and the East, and the Mahometans of the South, overspread the provinces of the Roman Empire, the city of Constantinople, where the Christian Religion was first established by Imperial authority, preserved its inhabitants from that general ignorance which overspread the rest of the world. During the dark ages, the light of learning, however feeble, was still kept burning in monastic cells; the Latin language, into which the Scriptures were translated, was cultivated; and the precious remains of classical genius escaped the ravages, to which every other species of property was exposed by the ferocity and violence of a barbarous people. From these repositories, happily secured from destruction by the superstition of the times, they were drawn at the revival of learning; and the service which they have afforded to the human mind has not been confined to its researches into philosophy, science, and literature, but extended to sacred criticism, and the illustration of the Scriptures.

As Christianity is thus auspicious to the cultivation of the intellectual powers, as well as beneficial in its moral effects, it deserves the first attention of the studious. The duties which it prescribes indeed are admirably calculated to produce that docile temper and soberness of thought, those habits of perseverance and patient investigation, which are
absolutely

absolutely necessary in the pursuit of general knowledge. Religion stamps its just value upon all other attainments, and consecrates them to the best and most noble service. It asserts its own glorious and transcendent superiority, because it confines not its researches to objects of immediate utility only, but elevates our thoughts to heaven, and carries on the mind to the growing improvement of its faculties, throughout all eternity¹.

Such are the reasons for our urgent importunities to our young readers, to lay the foundations of their lives on the firm ground of Christian faith, and build upon it whatever is just and good, worthy and noble, till the structure be complete in moral beauty. “The world, into which you are entering, lies in wait with a variety of temptations. Unfavourable sentiments of religion will soon be suggested to you, and all the snares of luxury, false honour, and interest, spread in your way, which are too successful, and to many fatal. Happy the few that in any part of life become sensible of

¹ To that elevation of mind above the common events of life, whether prosperous or adverse, which Christianity is capable of inspiring, may be applied the noble description of Claudian:—

Fortunæ secura nitet, nec fascibus ullis

Erigitur, plaufuæ cupit clarescere vulgi:

Nil opis externæ cupiens, nil indiga laudis;

Divitiis animosa suis, immotaque cunctis

Casibus, ex alta mortalia despicit arce.

their

their errors, and with painful resolution tread back the wrong steps, which they have taken! But happiest of men is he, who by an even course of right conduct *from the first*, as far as human frailty permits, hath at once avoided the miseries of sin, the sorrows of repentance, and the difficulties of virtue; who not only can think of his present state with composure, but reflects on his past behaviour with thankful approbation; and looks forward with unmixed joy to that important future hour, when he shall appear before God, and humbly offer to him a whole life spent in his service^m."

Let me then continue most seriously to exhort you, *my young Readers*, to listen with all earnestness to the sacred commands of the great Founder of Christianity. Continue to embrace with the most unshaken firmness, and to maintain with temperate yet unabating zeal, the Religion which he descended from heaven to establish in the world. Recollect that the characteristic tenets of that Religion are Faith, Hope and Charity. Faith does not merely consist in the assent of your judgment to the Evidences of Christianity, which have been laid before you, but is a pure and lively source of obedience to the divine commands. It is a principle which subdues the pride of human reason, gives to God the glory of our salvation, and to Christ the merit of it. Like a good tree it may be known by its abundant and excellent fruits, it

^m Archbishop Secker's Sermons.

sanctifies all the moral virtues, and renders them acceptable in the sight of God.—Charity, the bright, the lovely ornament of the Christian character, extends its benign influence to all men without distinction of country, sect or opinion, and in its various relations and comprehensive exercise for the good of all, whom it is in our power to benefit, raises us to a resemblance, as far as human nature will allow, of our Father in heaven. To keep the spirit of religion warm and operative in your hearts, maintain a hallowed intercourse with the Almighty by public and private devotion: to the same end, the perusal of the holy Scriptures will materially contribute. In them you will find that the Saviour of the world has illustrated his precepts by the most pleasing and striking parables, enforced them by the most awful sanctions, and recommended them by his own greatest and best of all examples. There he unfolds the great mystery of redemption, and communicates the means, by which degenerate and fallen man may recover the favour of his offended Maker. He gives a clear view of the divine superintendence of all human affairs: and he represents this mortal life, which forms only a part of our existence, as a short period of warfare and trial. He points to the solemn scenes, which open beyond the grave; the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the impartial distribution of rewards and punishments. He displays the completion of the divine mercy and goodness in the final establishment of perfection and happiness. By making such won-
derful

derful and interesting discoveries, let him excite your zeal, and fix your determination to adorn the acquirements of learning and science with the graces of his holy Religion, and to dedicate the days of health and of youth to his honour and service. Amid the retirement of study or the business of active life, let it be your first care, as it is your *duty*, and your *interest*, to recollect, that the great Author and Finisher of your faith has placed the rewards of virtue beyond the reach of time and death; and promised that eternal happiness to the faith and obedience of man, which can alone fill his capacity for enjoyment, and alone satisfy the ardent desires of his soul.

CLASS THE SECOND.

LANGUAGE.

CHAPTER I.*Language in General.*

THE principles and distinguishing features of Language render it a subject of pleasing and useful inquiry. It is the general vehicle of our ideas, and represents by words all the conceptions of the mind. Books and conversation are the offspring of this prolific parent. The former introduce us to the treasures of learning and science, and make us acquainted with the opinions, discoveries, and transactions of past ages; by the latter, the general intercourse of society is carried on, and our ideas are conveyed to each other with nearly the same rapidity, with which they arise in the mind. Language, in conjunction with reason, to which it gives its proper activity, use, and ornament, raises man above the lower orders of animals; and, in proportion as it is polished and refined, contributes greatly with other causes to exalt one nation above another in the scale of civilization and intellectual dignity.

Inquiries into the nature of any particular Language, if not too abstruse and metaphysical, will be found to deserve our attention. So close is the connexion between words and ideas, that no learning whatever can be obtained without their assistance. In proportion as the former are studied and examined, the latter become clear and complete; and according as words convey our meaning in a full and adequate manner, we avoid the inconvenience of being misunderstood, and are secure from the errors of misconception, and the cavils of dispute. It must always be remembered, that words are merely the *arbitrary* signs of ideas, connected with them by custom, not allied to them by nature; and that each idea, like a ray of light, is liable to be tinged by the medium of the word through which it passes. The volumes of controversy which fill the libraries of the learned would have been comparatively very small, if the disputants who wrote them had given a clear definition of their principal terms. Definition is one of the most useful parts of logic; and we shall find, when we come to the examination of that subject, that it is the only solid ground upon which reason can build her arguments, and proceed to just conclusions.

In order that the true sense of words may be ascertained, and that they may strike with their whole force, derivation lends its aid to definition. It is this which points out the source from whence a word springs, and the various streams of signification

cation that flow from it. The student, while employed in tracing the origin of Language, and ascertaining its signification, will also reap great advantage from calling *history* to his assistance; and he will find that allusions, idioms, and figures of speech are illustrated by particular facts, opinions, and institutions. The customs of the Greeks throw light upon the expressions of their authors; without some acquaintance with the Roman laws, many forms of expression in the Orations of Cicero are unintelligible: and many descriptions in the Old and New Testament are obscure, unless they are illustrated by a knowledge of eastern manners. Furnished with such aids, the scholar acquires complete, not partial information; throws upon Language all the light that can be reflected from his general studies; and imbibes, as far as a modern can imbibe it, the original spirit of ancient authors.

As long as any one confines his studies solely to his native tongue, he cannot understand it perfectly, or ascertain with accuracy its poverty or richness, its beauties or defects. He who cultivates other languages as well as his own, gains new instruments to increase the stock of his ideas, and opens new roads to the temple of knowledge. He draws his learning from pure sources, converses with the natives of other countries without the assistance of an interpreter, and surveys the contents of books without being under the necessity of an implicit reliance on translations. He may unite

the speculations of a philosopher with the acquirements of a linguist; he may compare different languages and form just conclusions with respect to their defects and beauties, and their conformity with manners and institutions. He may trace the progress of national refinement, and discover, by a comparison of arts and improvements with their correspondent terms, that the history of Language, inasmuch as it develops the efforts of human genius, and the rise and advancement of its inventions, constitutes an important part of the history of Man.

How the societies of men could have been originally formed without the aid of language, or language invented without society, are points which the inquiries of several writers, particularly Lord Monboddo and Adam Smith, however ingenious, are far from enabling us to settleⁿ. The only rational and satisfactory method of solving the difficulty is to refer the origin of speech to the great Creator himself. Not that it is necessary to suppose, that he inspired the first parents of mankind with any particular original or primitive language; but that he made them fully sensible of the power with which they were endued of forming articulate sounds, gave them an impulse to exert it, and left the arbitrary imposition of words to their own choice.

ⁿ See Lord Monboddo's *Origin of Language*, Vol. I. p. 514, &c. Vol. IV. p. 50. Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Vol. II, p. 403.

Their ingenuity was left to itself to multiply names, as new objects occurred to their observation; and thus language was gradually advanced by their descendants in process of time to the different degrees of copiousness and refinement, which it has reached among various nations.

This theory is conformable to the description given in the Sacred Writings, and agrees very remarkably with the opinions to be collected from prophane history. Plato maintains that the original language of man was a divine gift; and when he divides words into two classes, the primitive and the derivative, he attributes the former to the immediate communication of the Supreme Being, and the latter to the ingenuity of man. The Egyptians, from whom this opinion was probably derived, maintained that by Theuth, the god of eloquence, their ancestors were at first taught to speak^o.

There

^o Dr. Johnson talking of the origin of language said, "It must have come by inspiration: a thousand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not understanding enough to form a language; by the time that there is understanding enough, the organs are become stiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language. No foreigner, who comes to England, when advanced in life, ever pronounces English tolerably well; at least such instances are very rare. When I maintain that language must have come by inspiration, I do not mean that inspiration is required for rhetoric, and all the beauties of language; for *when once man has language*, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I

There is sufficient reason to suppose that in the early ages of the world, the difference of language in Europe, Asia, and Africa was no more than a difference of dialects; and that the people of Greece, Phenicia, and Egypt, mutually understood each other. The Greek and Latin are of acknowledged oriental origin; the Teutonic dialects have an affinity to Greek and Latin; the Celtic resembles the Hebrew, and other oriental tongues: In the Welsh there are many remarkable analogies to Hebrew^p. From these considerations which might be extended to a particular detail of proofs, it seems highly probable, that one original fountain, and one only, has produced not only those very antient streams of language that have been long dried up, but supplied those likewise which still continue to flow. And it is as probable, that this original or parent language was the Hebrew, if we consider the mode of its derivation from its radicals, and the simplicity of its structure. Hence the accounts recorded by Moses of the primeval race of men speaking one language, and their subsequent dispersion in consequence of the confusion of tongues which took place at Babel, receives strong confirmation.

mean only that inspiration seems to me to be necessary to give man the faculty of speech; to inform him that he may have speech; which I think he could no more find out without inspiration, than cows or hogs would think of such a faculty." Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. iii. p. 460.

^p Mitford's Greece, C. ii. Sect. 2.

Language

Language kept pace with the progress of ideas, and the cultivation of the mind urged mankind to the increase and improvement of the sounds, by which its dictates were communicated. From denoting the perceptions of sense, they proceeded to represent by words the instruments and operations of art, the results of observation and experience, the flights of fancy, and the deductions of reason. Hence may be traced the progress of poetry, history, and philosophy. Thus language, from being in its early age the child of necessity, became the parent of ornament; and words, originally the rude and uncouth dresses of ideas, have been improved, as society has advanced to higher degrees of refinement, into their most splendid and most beautiful decorations.

II. *The Origin and Progress of Literature.*

Next to speech, writing is without doubt the most useful of human arts. Written characters are of two kinds, they are either signs for things, or signs for words: of the former kind are pictures and hieroglyphics; of the latter, are the characters of the alphabet now employed by the nations of Europe^a.

To fix the sounds of the voice as soon as they are breathed from the lips, and to represent ideas

^a Blair, Lecture VII.

faithfully to the eye as soon as they are formed in the mind, are the wonderful properties of letters. It is not easy for those to whom books have from their childhood been familiar, and who view literature only in its present highly advanced state of improvement, to form a proper notion of the ingenuity, or the merit of this invention. Whoever invented letters, if it was a human invention, was a man of a most refined understanding, and metaphysical turn of mind, for it was a very extraordinary transition to pass from the representation of objects by pictures or hieroglyphics, to tracing the sounds of the human voice to their simplest elements, reducing them to a small number of vowels and consonants, and expressing by those vowels and consonants every word of the mouth, and thought of the mind. Drawings and paintings shewed the ingenious efforts which human art could make towards representing events and actions, by the imitation of objects of sight; and this was the universal practice of nations in the early ages of the world. During the first interview of Cortes and his Spaniards with the Mexicans, some painters were diligently employed in delineating upon white cotton cloths, figures of the ships, horses, artillery, soldiers, and whatever attracted their eyes as singular and novel. These pictures were sent to the Emperor Montezuma, to give him information of the arrival of the wonderful strangers. But it comes not within the province of the art of painting to represent a succession of thoughts, and its operations are very tedious; so that such a mode of information

mation is very ill adapted to the quickness of the mind, and its various exertions. The great excellence of the characters of the alphabet consists in their simplicity, in the ease and precision with which they can express, and the expedition and clearness with which they can communicate ideas of all kinds. By their assistance in carrying on epistolary correspondence, the warm effusions of love and friendship are conveyed even to the most remote countries, and the constant intercourse of commerce, science, and learning, is maintained in defiance of all the obstacles of distance^r. Learning is indebted to the art of writing for its wide diffusion and long continuance; and to the same cause genius and virtue owe the rewards of lasting fame. Oral tradition is fleeting and uncertain; it is a stream which, as it continues to flow into the ocean of oblivion, is mixed with the impure soil of error and falsehood. A striking proof is afforded by the depraved notions of a Deity, and the absurd and cruel rites and ceremonies of religion which

^r The application of letters to some of the most important affairs of life is touched upon with great elegance by Palamedes, a Hero in the Trojan war, who claims the invention.

Τα της γεληθης φαρμακ' ορθωσας μου

Αφωνα κ' φωνῶντα συλλαβας τιθεις,

Εξευρον ανθρωποισι γραμμαῖ' ειδεναι,

Ως' ε παροντα πονηας ὑπερ πλακ

Τακει κατ' οικας παν' επισασθαι καλως,

Παισιν τ' αποθησκοῦτα χρηματων μείρον

Γραψαντα λειπειν, τον λαβοντα δ' ειδεναι.

Ἄδ' εις πιπλυσιν ανθρωποις κακα

Δελτ' δαιρει· κ' εκ εα ψευδη λεγειν.

Euripid. Fragment. Edit. Barnes, p. 487.

formerly

formerly prevailed among some barbarous nations, and still continues among others. But the art of writing preserves the memorials of truth, and imparts to successive generations the records of accurate knowledge: it constitutes the light, glory, and ornament of civilized man. It has fixed and perpetuated the inventions and discoveries which have been made in the world, and placed them out of the reach of time and accident. The voices of the most profound philosophers, and most delightful poets of antiquity, have for ages ceased to charm the ear; and even the sacred words once uttered by the Redeemer of mankind himself, as they were necessarily limited to a particular time and place, can now be heard to issue from his lips no more: but the art of writing, brought to perfection as it has been by the art of printing, has conferred a kind of immortality on the expressions of the tongue, and conveys the inestimable lessons of revelation, learning, and science, to every age and to every people.

Can any two alphabets appear to the eye more unlike each other than the Hebrew and the English? Yet the ingenious reasons assigned by Bishop Warburton, the author of the divine legation of Moses, make it highly probable, that the latter were derived from the former. He states upon the authority of antient writers, that in the early ages of the world, there was a gradual improvement in the manner of conveying ideas by signs; that pictures, as we have observed, were employed, as
the

the first representations of actions, and, in process of time, alphabetical characters were substituted as an easier and shorter mode of communicating thoughts. Moses, the great law-giver of the Jews, brought letters with the rest of his learning from Egypt; and he simplified their forms, in order to prevent the abuse to which they would have been liable, as symbolical characters, among a people so much inclined to superstition as the Jews. From the Jews this alphabetical mode of writing passed to the Syrians and Phenicians, or perhaps was common to them both at the same time. The Greek authors maintained that Cadmus and his Phœnician companions introduced the knowledge of letters into Greece. Herodotus records the curious fact that he saw at Thebes in Bœotia, in the temple of Apollo, three tripods inscribed with Cadmeian letters, which very much resembled the Ionic*. It is too well known to require any detail of proof, that the Romans were taught their letters by the Greeks. Tacitus has remarked the similarity of the Roman character to the most ancient Greek, that is, the Pelasgic†, and the same observation is made by Pliny, and confirmed by the inscription on an ancient tablet of brass, dedicated to Minerva. By the Romans their alphabet was communicated to the Goths, and the nations of modern Europe. And if evidence to this detail of proofs be wanted, the curious may find some that

* Herodoti, l. 5. sect. 58, 59. p. 306. Edit. Gronov.

† Taciti Annal. l. xi. Plinii Nat. Hist. l. vii. c. 58.

may be more satisfactory, by considering attentively the order, the names, and the powers of the letters in the several alphabets just mentioned; and by examining in the learned works of Montfaucon, Shuckford, and Warburton, the characters themselves, copied from ancient inscriptions, how they have gradually been altered, and have deviated from the first forms through successive changes, previous to their assuming their present shapes and figures^u.

It does not appear how it could possibly have happened that all the languages before mentioned, that is to say, the Hebrew, the Syriac, the Phenician, the Greek, the Roman, and the English, could have the same, or very nearly the same, number and order of letters, and similar letters with similar powers, if they had not been derived from the same origin.

Nor is the different direction in which the Hebrew language was written, any ground of objection to this opinion. The Hebrew letters are written from the right hand to the left, and this was the custom of all the eastern nations; but the English reverse this order. Now, it appears from some old inscriptions, that the eastern mode of writing from the right to the left, was practiced by the Greeks. They afterwards adopted a new

^u Stillingfleet, v. i. c. i. sect. 20. Shuckford's Connexion, v. i. p. 223. Mitford, v. i. p. 88. Goguet's Origin of Laws, v. i. p. 177, 183, &c.

method, by writing alternately from the right to the left, and the left to the right, which was called *boustrophedon*, as if the practice was adopted from the manner in which oxen plow the furrows of a field. Of this a curious specimen is extant in the Sigœan monument^w; and down to the time when Solon, the great lawgiver of Athens, flourished, this continued to be the method of writing. In this manner his laws were written. At length the movement of the hand from left to right, being found more convenient and agreeable, the practice of writing in this direction has prevailed not only in England, but in all other countries in Europe^x.

III. *Characteristic Distinctions between ancient and modern Languages.*

The formation of the modern languages of Europe is intimately connected with the history of the dark ages. The Latin language began to be corrupted in the fifth century, as soon as the Goths and Lombards, both of whom derived their origin from Germany, had gained possession of Italy. From the reign of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, the Italian language began gradually to assume its form and character; and its deviation from the Latin was particularly marked by the use of articles instead of the variations of cases, and of auxiliary verbs instead of many changes of tenses.

^w See Shuckford's *Connexion*, vol. i. p. 264, &c. Goguet. v. ii. p. 233.

^x Blair, *Lecture VII.*

In proportion as the Goths made more successful and extensive ravages in the Roman empire, their phraseology was blended with that of their captives, and the coarse dialect of Provence and Sicily contributed to the composition of the Italian language. As in the features of the Italian ladies, the curious traveller may now remark a striking likeness of the faces engraved on antique gems; so in the Italian language he may discover a strong resemblance to the original from which it is derived. If it want the strength and majesty of the Latin, it inherits that delicacy and melodious flow of expression, which never fail to charm every reader of taste, in the works of Dante, Ariosto, Petrarch, Tasso, and Metastasio. Italy maintains this singular glory with respect to her literature, that while the early poets and historians of France and England are become in a great measure obsolete, those of her writers, who flourished so early as the fourteenth century, are read with the fashionable authors of the present times, and share in their popularity and applause.

In the fifth century, the Franks, a people of Germany, under the command of Pharamond, invaded France, and conquered its ancient inhabitants. By a mixture of their dialects the French language was formed, which gradually polishing the rude expressions and uncouth phraseology observable in its first writers, has acquired in later times a great degree of precision, delicacy, and elegance, and more perhaps from the ease with which other
nations

Nations adopt French fashions, or the assiduity with which the French introduce them, than its own intrinsic excellence, it has been for some time allowed to take the precedence of the other languages of Europe.

Between the languages of Greece and Rome, and those of modern times, a striking difference prevails. The prepositions of the latter supply the place of the cases of the former. Auxiliary verbs are used instead of many of the ancient tenses: these forms of expression contribute greatly to simplify modern languages, in point of rudiments and first principles, and consequently render them more easy to be acquired. Still however they are subject to faults, which nearly counterbalance their excellence; for they are weaker in expression, and less agreeable to the ear.

In the classical languages, great advantage results from the power of placing words which agree with each other in any part of a sentence most suitable to its harmony; and this liberty of position arises from the various terminations of nouns and verbs. In the English language in particular, two words which agree with, or govern each other, require to be placed together, or nearly so, that is, the adjective must not be placed far from its substantive, or the verb from its nominative case; otherwise the phrase will be unintelligible. Every scholar is sensible, that the inversion of words is one principal source of beauty in all classical compositions, and particularly in poetry.

Another very remarkable distinction prevails in *Poetry*. Those effusions of fancy which the moderns express in rhyme, the ancients conveyed in metre. In the classic authors, the quantity, that is, the length or shortness of syllables is fixed, and their various combinations give a pleasing variety to pronunciation, both in prose and verse, and render every word more distinct and harmonious.

Rhyme is frequently the source of redundancy and feebleness of expression; as even among the most admired writers instances frequently occur of the sense being so much expanded, as to be on that account much weakened, because the poet is under the necessity of closing his couplets with corresponding sounds. The translation of Homer by Pope, and of Virgil by Dryden, afford striking proofs of the truth of this observation. The verbose passages in many of the finest tragedies of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, arise from the same cause. In rhyme the sense is usually closed with the first line, or at least with the second. This produces a tedious uniformity, which is particularly unpleasing to those, whose ears are accustomed to the varied periods of the classic authors. Rhyme appears not so well adapted to grand and long, as to gay and short compositions. Its perpetual repetition in the *Henriade* of Voltaire is tiresome: in the stanzas of the *Fairy Queen* of Spenser its recurrence, although stated and uniform, is more tolerable, because the pauses are
more

more varied: but it certainly is of all compositions best suited to the lively turn of an epigram, and the ludicrous descriptions of the mock-heroic. As a proof how little rhyme can contribute to the essential beauties of poetry, those persons are esteemed the best readers, who pay the least regard to its frequent return, and attend only to such pauses, as the meaning of an author naturally points out to them.

A wider and more accurate survey of nature, and a more diligent cultivation of art, by gradually opening new channels of knowledge, have increased the number of words. Hence we find, that the moderns excel the ancients in copiousness of language upon many subjects, of which abundant instances occur in the terms which express certain animals, plants, metals, earths, amusements, and recreations, various machines, implements, and materials employed in agriculture, navigation, and chemistry. And in several branches of science, discoveries have been made, which were entirely unknown in ancient times.

This greater extent and variety of knowledge result from the operations of the spirit of enterprise, and the diligent ardour of research, which has explored new paths, and improved upon former discoveries. But it may abate the triumph of the moderns to reflect, that much of their superior knowledge may be the natural consequence of living in the *later* ages of the world. Future generations,

generations, if they be active and inquisitive, will possess the same advantage over the present; and the advancement of language will continue to be proportionate to the progress of the arts and sciences.

By tracing the variety of alphabets and languages to one source, we simplify subjects of curious inquiry; and we extricate ourselves from that perplexity, in which we should be involved, if we rejected an opinion so conformable to reason, and which the more accurate is our examination into ancient history, the more grounds we find to adopt. And it is a pleasing circumstance to observe, that while we maintain a system, supported by the most respectable profane authorities, we strengthen the arguments in favour of the *high antiquity* of the Jewish language, and confirm its claims to be considered as the parent language of the world.

Our preceding and subsequent remarks on languages, both ancient and modern, and their comparative merits and defects, may lead to many useful inquiries and reflections, as the progress of human knowledge is closely connected with the subject. The art of writing has been the great means by which the understanding of mankind has been enlightened, their manners improved, their inventions perpetuated, and the comforts and pleasures of social life increased. As it would open an almost boundless field of observation, if
we

we were to attempt to survey all the advantages which the improvements of language and of literature have produced, we must confine our attention to subjects of more immediate utility, and consider in detail those languages only, which are particularly interesting, on account of the people to whom they belong, and the information which they convey to us.

CHAPTER II.

The English Language.

THE impressions made by the conquerors who have settled in any particular nation are in few respects more clearly to be traced, than by the change they have produced in the language of the natives. This observation may be applied with peculiar propriety to our own country: for after the Saxons had subdued the Britons, they introduced into England their own language, which was a dialect of the Teutonic or Gothic. From the fragments of the Saxon laws, history, and poetry still extant, we have many proofs to convince us, that it was capable of expressing with a great degree of copiousness and energy the sentiments of a civilized people. For a period of six hundred years no considerable variation took place. William the Conqueror promoted another change of language, which had been begun by Edward the Confessor, and caused the Norman French to be used, both in his own palace, and in the courts of justice; and it became in a short time current among the higher orders of his subjects. The constant intercourse, which subsisted between France and England for several centuries, introduced a very considerable addition of words, and they were adopted with very slight deviation from their original, as is evident from the works of our early writers,

writers, particularly Chaucer, Gower, and Wickliffe, and many other authors quoted by Warton in his curious and entertaining History of English Poetry. Such were the grand sources of the English tongue; but the stream has been from time to time augmented by the copious influx of the Latin and other languages, with which the pursuits of commerce, the cultivation of learning, and the progress of the arts, have made our ancestors and ourselves acquainted.

The same countries, which have supplied the English with improvements, have furnished the various terms by which they are denoted. Music, sculpture, and painting, borrowed their expressions from Italy; the words used in navigation are taken from the inhabitants of Flanders and Holland; the French have supplied the expressions used in fortification and military affairs. The terms of mathematics and philosophy are borrowed from Latin and Greek. In the Saxon may be found all our words in general use, as well as those which belong to agriculture, and the common mechanical arts.

But notwithstanding the English language can boast of so little simplicity as to its origin, yet in its grammatical construction it bears a close resemblance to Hebrew, the most simple language of antiquity. Its words depart less from the original form, than those of any other modern tongues. The article possesses a striking peculiarity, differing from that in most other languages, for it is indeclinable, and common to all genders. In the sub-

stantives there is but one variation of case; and it is only by the different degrees of comparison, that changes are made in the adjectives, for they have no distinction of genders. There is no variety of conjugations, and there are no gerunds or supines. The verbs preserve in many instances very nearly, and in some exactly, their radical form in the different tenses. Almost all the modifications of time, past, present, and future, are expressed by auxiliary verbs. This simplicity of structure renders our language much easier to a learner than Italian or French, in which the variations of the verbs in particular are very numerous, complex, and difficult to be retained.

The Abbe Sicard, well known as the humane and intelligent teacher of the deaf and dumb at Paris, took occasion to remark to some travellers, that of all languages the English was the most simple, the most rational, and the most natural in its construction. As a proof of the truth of this assertion he observed, that his pupils, as they began to learn the means of conveying their thoughts by writing, constantly made use of Anglicisms*.

The English language is uniform in its composition, and its irregularities are far from being numerous. The order of construction is more easy and simple, than that of Latin and Greek. These peculiarities give it a philosophical character; and as its terms are strong, expressive, and

* Le Maitre's rough Sketch of Paris.

copious, no language seems better calculated to facilitate the intercourse of mankind, as a universal medium of communication,

Since the Grammars of Lowth and Priestley, and the Dictionary of Johnson have been published, our language has been brought nearer to a fixed standard. It is now considered, more than ever, as an object of grammatical rules, and regular syntax. Its idioms are more accurately ascertained by a comparison of passages selected from the best authors. The derivations are traced from their original sources with greater precision; and its orthography is now more reduced to settled rules. To the labours of *Johnson*, as a *Lexicographer*, our nation is under great obligations; and if he has in some instances failed in diligence of research, or extent of plan, we must at least be ready to allow, that he has contributed more than any of his countrymen towards the elucidation of his subject; he has given his definitions of words with great clearness, and confirmed them by a detail of quotations from the best authors. There is perhaps no book, professedly written upon a philological subject, that can give to foreigners as well as to natives, so just and advantageous an idea of our language, or of the variety and the excellence of our writers: the Preface to his Dictionary is a most accurate and deservedly admired composition.

The derivation of English words, as far as it
relates

relates to Latin and Greek, has been frequently and satisfactorily traced: but those which are of Saxon origin were a long time prevalent without sufficient investigation. The Author of the “*Dictionary of Purley*,” whose natural acuteness and turn for metaphysical research peculiarly qualified him for such a task, has directed his attention to the subject; and the ingenious theory which he has formed, respecting the origin of the indeclinable parts of speech, was remarkably confirmed by his knowledge of Saxon. He has proved very clearly, that many of our adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions, which are commonly thought to have no signification, when detached from other words, are derived from obsolete nouns or verbs, the meaning of which they respectively retain; but which have been shortened for general convenience, and corrupted by length of time. Such a discovery is valuable, not only on account of the light it throws upon those parts of our language which have been too slightly regarded by all former grammarians; but for the assistance it affords to the science of etymology in general.

Dr. Johnson has declaimed against *translations* as the bane of language: but Warton has observed, in the “*History of English Poetry*,” on the contrary, that our language derived great benefits from the translations of the classics in the sixteenth century. This difference of opinion may probably be reconciled, by supposing that these writers advert to the state of a language at different periods of time.

time. When it is in its dawn of improvement, as was the case when the translations of the Classics were first made into English, the addition of foreign terms may be requisite to keep pace with the influx of new ideas. In a more advanced period of arts and civilization, such an increase is not only unnecessary, but may be injurious; and the practice seems as needless, as the introduction of foreign troops for the defence of a country, when the natives alone are sufficient for its protection.

I. *Beauties of the English Language.*

A language, which has been so much indebted to others, both ancient and modern, must of course be very copious and expressive. In these respects perhaps it may be brought into competition with any now spoken in the world. No Englishman has had reason to complain, since our tongue has reached its present degree of excellence, that his ideas could not be adequately expressed, or clothed in a suitable dress. No author has been under the necessity of writing in a foreign language, on account of its superiority to our own. Whether we open the volumes of our divines, philosophers, historians, or artists, we shall find that they abound with all the terms necessary to communicate their observations and discoveries, and give to their readers the most complete views of their respective subjects. Hence it appears, that our language is sufficient for all topics, and can give proper and adequate expression to variety of
of

of argument, delicacy of taste, and fervour of genius. And that it has sufficient copiousness to communicate to mankind every action, event, invention, and observation, in a full, clear, and elegant manner, we can prove by an appeal to the authors, who are at present held in the greatest esteem.

But its excellence is perhaps in few respects displayed to such advantage, as in the works of our poets. Whoever reads the works of Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, will be sensible that they employ a kind of diction which may be said to be sacred to the Muses. It is distinguished from prose, not merely by the harmony of numbers, but by the great variety of its appropriate terms and phrases. A considerable degree of beauty results likewise from the different measures employed in poetry. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso* of Milton, *Alexander's Feast* by Dryden, the *Ode to the Passions* by Collins, and the *Bard* of Gray, are as complete examples of versification, judiciously varied, according to the nature of the subjects, as they are specimens of exquisite sentiment and original genius.

One of the most beautiful figures in poetry is the *Prosopopoeia*, or personification, which ascribes personal qualities and actions to inanimate and fictitious beings. The genius of our language enables the English poet to give the best effect to this figure, as the genders of nouns are not unalterably fixed, but may be varied according to the

the nature of the subject. Thus the poet can make whenever he pleases the most striking distinction between verse and prose, and communicate to his descriptions that spirit and animation, which cannot fail to delight every reader of taste, in the following passages.

Milton thus personifies Wisdom ;

———“ Wisdom’s self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where with her best nurse Contemplation,
She plumes *her* feathers, and lets grow *her* wings,
That in the various bustle of resort,
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired.”

And Pope, in his Windsor Forest, thus describes the effects of Peace :

“ Exil’d by thee from earth to deepest hell,
In brazen bonds shall barbarous discord dwell.
Gigantic Pride, pale Terror, gloomy Care,
And mad Ambition shall attend *her* there.
There purple Vengeance bath’d in gore retires,
Her weapons blunted, and extinct *her* fires.
There hateful Envy *her* own snakes shall feel,
And Persecution mourn *her* broken wheel :
There Faction roar, Rebellion bite *her* chain,
And gasping Furies thirst for blood in vain.”

Warton thus describes the advance of Evening :

“ While Evening veil’d in shadows brown
Puts *her* matron mantle on,
And mists in spreading streams convey
More fresh the fumes of new-mown hay ;
Then Goddess guide my pilgrim feet
Contemplation hoar to meet,
As slow *he* winds in museful mood,
Near the rush’d marge of Cherwell’s flood.”

Our

Our heroic verse is remarkable for the variety of its pauses. Some pause is found in the verse of all nations; in the French it is tiresome for its uniformity, for in every line of twelve syllables, immediately after the sixth there occurs a regular rest of the voice, dividing the line into two equal parts, and this monotonous structure runs through the whole of a Tragedy, or an Epic Poem. Take for an example the first lines that occur in Voltaire's Tragedy of *Adelaide du Guesclin*, and try them by this rule.

Quand j'ai dit que *bientot* on verrait reunis
 Les debris dispersés de l'empire des lis;
 Je vous le dis encore au sein de votre gloire;
 Et vos lauriers brillants, cueillis par la victoire,
 Pourront sur votre front se flétrir désormais,
 S'ils n'y sont soutenus de l'olive de paix;
 Tous les chefs de l'état lassés de ces ravages
 Cherchent un port tranquille après tant de naufrages.

Our verse has the distinguished superiority of admitting the pause to be varied through different syllables of the line; and thus the cadence of the verse may be diversified in a manner the most pleasing to the ear. Try the experiment on some of the first verses in Falconer's *Shipwreck*.

"While jarring interests wake the world to arms,
 And fright the peaceful vale with dire alarms,
 While Albion bids th' avenging thunders roll
 Along her vassal deep from pole to pole;
 Sick of the scene, where War with ruthless hand
 Spreads desolation o'er the bleeding land,
 'Tis mine, retired beneath this cavern hoar,
 That stands all lonely on the sea-beat shore,
 Far other themes of deep distress to sing,
 Than ever trembled from the vocal string."

But

But this variety of pauses may be better exemplified in blank verse, and that Milton tried the whole compass of them with success is evident from many, and particularly the following passages :

—— ——— Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt,
Clear *spring*, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred *song*; but chief
Thee *Sion*, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed *feet*, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit ———

Then feed on *thoughts*, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal *note*. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even, or morn.

He who reads Milton's *Paradise Lost* with a true relish for its beauties, will never embrace the opinion of the Critic, who asserted, that "blank verse is verse only to the eye." Blank verse is the glory of the English Poetry, which the French language, from its want of energy and vigour, cannot support. It gives great freedom to the poet, and allows him to take the most lofty flights unshackled by the chains of rhyme. It requires however great elevation of thought, splendour of imagery, and elegance of diction to prevent him from sinking into prose. And as the poet is under no necessity to close the sense with the couplet, he must "bridle in his struggling muse" lest she be too excursive, and range beyond the proper bounds

bounds of description. It gives greater scope of expression and greater variety of pause than rhyme, and is well adapted to the strains of the tragic and the pastoral, as well as the Epic Muse; as is evident from Shakespeare's *Tragedies* and Thomson's *Seasons*.

We must however acknowledge, that it is chiefly to grave subjects—to the details of the historian, the arguments of the politician and the divine, the speculations of the philosopher, and the invention of the epic and the tragic poet, that our expressions are best adapted. Our language has energy and copiousness; but it accords not so well with the mirth of the gay, or the pathos of the distressed, as some others. In describing the pleasantries of the mind, in the effusions of delicate humour, and the trifling levities of social intercourse, the French possesses a decided advantage. In delineating the tender passions, the soothing of pity, and the ardour of love, we must yield the superiority to the softer cadence of Italian syllables.

II. *Defects of the English Language.*

Although it is natural to indulge a partiality to our native language, as well as to our native soil; yet this prepossession ought not to make us blind to the defects either of the one or the other. We shall only advert to the principal imperfections of the language.

language. Most of the words, except such as are of Roman or Grecian origin, are monosyllables terminated by consonants; and this makes our pronunciation rugged and broken, and unlike the regular and easy flow of classic phraseology. Many of them are harsh and inharmonious; and there are some syllables, which can scarcely be pronounced by an Italian or a Frenchman, whose organs of speech are accustomed to softer expressions. “It is to the terminations with consonants that the harshness of our language may be imputed. The melody of a language depends greatly upon its vowel terminations. In English not more than a dozen common words end in *a*: about two dozen end in *o*. In *y* we have no less than 4900 words, about an eighth of our language; our words amounting to about 35,000^y.

The want of different terminations in verbs, as it introduces the frequent use of auxiliary verbs, obliges us to express our meaning by circumlocutions. There is no distinction in the persons of the plural number of verbs, nor in the tenses or persons of the passive voice. This is often the cause of ambiguity; and foreigners, in the perusal of our books, must be very much at a loss, without the closest attention to the preceding and subsequent parts of sentences, to understand the particular sense of many passages. Our accents are calculated to give considerable variety to pronunciation; but the

^y Heron's Letters, p. 247.

prevailing mode of throwing them back, in some cases, to the first syllable of a word, in a great degree destroys their use; and gives an indistinct, hurried, and almost unintelligible sound to the other syllables. This practice is carried so far as to make us totally disregard the quantity of syllables in words, either wholly Latin, or derived from that language or Greek, as in *blásphēmy*, from *βλαφημία*; *irritate*, from *irrito*; *orātor*, from *orātor*; *senātor*, from *senātor*; *theātre*, from *theātrum*; *corōner* and *córōnet*, from *corōna*. Zealous as some authors, particularly Dr. Warton in his *Essay on the Genius of Pope*, have been to establish the excellence of English with respect to quantity, and to prove that it is in itself harmonious and musical, we must, after all their ingenious arguments, be obliged to leave to the Greeks and Latins the regular and uniform distinctions of long and short syllables; for although there are many of our words, which we can affirm to be long or short, yet a great number of them cannot be said to be of any determinate quantity.

The mode of *Spelling* appears to have been in former times extremely vague and unsettled. It is not uncommon to find in our old writers the same word spelt differently, even in the same page. Orthography began to be more an object of attention, and was rescued from its great uncertainty, at the beginning of the last century. Yet authors of considerable eminence have differed much from each other in their modes of spelling some particular

cular words, and have adjusted their practice to their own ideas of propriety. Dr. Lardner was desirous of reviving the old mode of spelling in some instances, as in *goodnessè, forgivenesse, historie, extraordinarie, &c.* Benson, a commentator on St. Paul's Epistles, wrote *præface, præfix, prævail, procede, persue, and explane*, like Lardner. Dr. Middleton, a more elegant writer, made similar attempts; and Upton, the learned commentator on Shakespeare, tires his readers by the repetitions of the word *tast* for the substantive taste. Mr. Mitford, the Historian of ancient Greece, has introduced some novelties of this kind, such as *iland, ingage, injoyment, unsteddy, soverein, and pictureshk.* He has made a more laudable attempt to restore correct spelling in proper names derived from Greek, as in *Areiopagus, Epameinondas, Peisistratus, Peisander, Iphigeneia, &c.* The most useful reform of this kind would be to spell all proper names, whether ancient or modern, exactly as they occur in their respective languages. The French would then change their ridiculous diminutives, such as *Tite Live*, and *Quint Curce*, for the genuine appellations of *Titus Livius*, and *Quintus Curtius*; and we should no longer degrade *Marcus Antonius*, and *Tullius*, into *Marc Antony* and *Tully*.

Our Orthography remained in a fluctuating state, till at length what was the general wish, what many had attempted in vain, and seemed to require the united efforts of numbers, was

accomplished by the diligence and the acuteness of one, whom we are happy to mention repeatedly, for his eminent services to the literature of his country. “Dr. Johnson published his Dictionary; and as the weight of truth and reason is irresistible, its authority has nearly fixed the external form of our language, and from its decisions few appeals have yet been made. Indeed so convenient is it to have one acknowledged standard to recur to—so much preferable, in matters of this nature, is a trifling degree of irregularity to a continual change, and fruitless pursuit of unattainable perfection; that it is earnestly to be hoped, that no author will henceforth on slight grounds be tempted to innovate. Dr. Johnson is every where the declared enemy of unnecessary innovation. The principles on which he founds his improvements, are the stable ones of etymology and analogy: the former science will not soon be more completely understood than it was by him; and if in the latter, a few steps may have been made beyond the limits of his observation, they have been gained only by the pursuit of minute researches, inconsistent with the greatness of his undertaking².”

It is the opinion of this learned Lexicographer, that as we received many of our words originally of Latin derivation, through the medium of the French, we ought to follow the latter mode of spelling in preference to the former. Good as this

² Nares's Orthoepey, p. 269.

general rule may be thought, there are some exceptions, which in compliance with prevailing custom he readily admits himself. "The rule required him to write *enquire* from the French *enquerir*, not *inquire*. The termination in *our* is one of those which has created much dispute. At present the practice seems to favour the rejection of *u* in all words of more than two syllables. Johnson spells *author* without a final *u*, but always writes *honour* and *favour*^a.

It may be laid down as a *general rule*, that the most judicious attention that can be paid to orthography, must necessarily consist in distinguishing those irregularities which are inherent *in the language itself*, from those introduced by the *capricious*, the *fashionable*, and the *ignorant*.

The preceding observations have chiefly related to words considered by themselves. It may be proper, in the next place, to make some remarks upon our composition, or the arrangement and connexion of words, as they constitute sentences. In this respect all modern languages fall short of the ancient, which are distinguished by a peculiar roundness, harmony, and compass of period. The Greeks and Romans, by having different genders and terminations of their verbs and nouns, gave a precision to their meaning, which enabled them to diversify the order of construction, in an infinite

^a Nares, p. 276.

variety of modes, without any injury to the sense. Of this advantage our language is in a great degree incapable. Our words in general are placed in the natural order of construction; and to this standard we endeavour to reduce both our literal and free translations of Greek and Latin authors: in the works of our writers we seek in vain for those closely connected parts of a sentence, and that judicious position of the principal word in the most advantageous place, which have so striking an effect in the composition of the classics.

III. *Sir Thomas Brown — Dr. Johnson —
Mr. Gibbon.*

The cultivation of the learned languages, since the reign of Henry VIII. has introduced many words of Latin origin into the conversation and the writings of the English. The attention paid to Italian literature, particularly in the reign of Elizabeth, contributed to increase their number. In the works of Shakespeare we find many such words; and those, which his imperfect knowledge of Latin and Greek did not afford him the opportunity of taking immediately from the classics, he probably borrowed from the same translations, which furnished many of his plots, speeches, and characters^b. Yet he seems to have considered the too free admission of this strange phraseology as an ob-

^b For a very curious List of these Translations, see Dr. Farmer's Essay on the learning of Shakespeare.

ject of occasional censure, and has therefore exposed it to ridicule with great effect in the ludicrous characters of Holofernes and Pistol. The dramatic productions of Ben Jonson his contemporary are much more strongly marked by these exotic conceits. But of all our writers of those times no one seems to have been so ambitious of the stiff and pompous decorations of a latinised style, as Sir Thomas Brown, the author of a work on *Vulgar Errors*. His sentences are so replete with words, which differ only from Latin in their terminations, that he is entitled to the first place in the school of pedantry. It is very extraordinary, that the force of his own observation, which was levelled against those who indulged in this practice, recoils upon himself." "If elegancie still precededeth, and English pens maintain that stream we have of late observed to flow from many, we shall within few years be faine to learne Latine to understand English, and a work will prove of equal facility in either^c."

The affected structure of his style is apparent even from the first sentence of the above mentioned work. "Would truth dispense, we could be content with Plato, that knowledge were but remembrance, that intellectual acquisition were but remisciential evocation, &c." That many of his words may be translated into Latin with little more than a change in their terminations, the following

^c Preface to the *Vulgar Errors*.

passages will show. "Scintillations are not the accension of the air upon the collision of two hard bodies, but rather the inflammable effluences discharged from the bodies collided." "Ice is figured in its guttulous descent from the air, and grows greater or lesser according unto the accretion or pluvius aggelation about the mother and fundamental atoms thereof^d."

There is sufficient reason to suppose, that Dr. Johnson formed his style upon the model of Sir T. Brown. He has written his life; has quoted in his Dictionary many of his words, unsupported by any other authority; and perhaps in his works, it would not be difficult to trace some marks of direct imitation.

Between the opinions and the practice of Johnson there is a striking inconsistency; for in the Preface to his Dictionary, he regrets that our language had been for some time gradually departing from its ancient Teutonic character; and yet in his works, particularly in the Rambler, he promotes this departure in the most studious manner. From the writer of an English dictionary might naturally be expected a close adherence to idiom; and that he would mark the line of distinction very strongly between such words and phrases as were unsupported by sufficient authority, and such as had been sanctioned by the usage of the best authors. And

^d P. 40, 41.

from a writer, whose professed purpose it was to recommend the beauties of moral truth to the different ranks of the public at large, and to render topics of criticism intelligible and popular, we should expect few pedantic or affected modes of expression. Whether we consider the nature of his Essays, or the general use for which they were intended, it must be evident, that such subjects call for peculiar perspicuity of expression. Johnson seems to have judged the style of Addison more worthy of praise, than proper for his imitation, when he judiciously observed that, "Whoever wishes to acquire a style which is familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." Our literature indeed dates a new era from the publication of his works; and some of his words, if they be not of his own coining, are rarely to be met with in former writers. By endeavouring to avoid low and familiar expressions, he is frequently lofty and turgid; and to a reader unacquainted with the learned languages, must sometimes be wholly unintelligible. His formal modes of expression, involved periods, frequent use of the substantive instead of the adjective, and stated introduction of triads, are peculiarities, if not innovations, which have drawn after him a train of imitators. Some of them are indeed entitled to praise on account of their possessing sufficient judgment to adapt their style to their thoughts; and others have exposed themselves to ridicule by the
ludicrous

ludicrous affociation of pompous words with feeble ideas.

If our subject required us to weigh the general merits of this author, as well as to remark the peculiarities of his style, we should readily concur in the commendation bestowed upon his extraordinary abilities, and acknowledge, that the energy of his language was often a sufficient apology for his elaborate pomp; and that our censure must in some degree abate its severity, when we consider the force and the discrimination of his terms, the correctness, variety, and splendour of his imagery, the power of his understanding, his love of virtue and religion, and his zeal for their promotion, so extremely well adapted to the different characters he sustained in the literary world as a moralist, a philologist, and a critic.

In the course of our remarks upon this subject, Gibbon, the historian of "the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," claims some share of our attention. It is a great misfortune for the public, and particularly for the younger part of his readers, that he has concealed the poison of infidelity under a honied sweetness of style. Skilled in all the arts of composition, and studious to please and to amuse us at the expence of correctness of taste, he has blended the diction of a *poet* with that of an *historian*. His work is not so much a narrative of facts, as a dissertation upon history, and unless the
reader

reader is previously acquainted with the subjects, many allusions are obscure, and some are unintelligible. The arrangement of his sentences is frequently so much alike, and they are formed in so mechanical a manner, that they seem to have been constructed according to some particular rule. Although many of his characters are finely drawn, and many of his descriptions are lively and beautiful; yet his verboseness frequently fatigues and perplexes the attention. He endeavours, and often with unsuccessful pains, to give dignity to trifles, and to adorn every subject, whether trivial or important, with the flowery ornaments of description. In various instances he must offend the judgment of those who wish to see the different kinds of writing confined within their due limits, and more particularly expect, that an historian should not depart, either in point of dignity of character, or propriety of expression, from the rules of correct composition. A careful reader of Gibbon will observe, that his style is strongly marked by pomp, affectation, and redundancy; that he frequently uses words in new and unauthorized senses; and sometimes adopts the French idiom^e.

It is not easy to estimate how much the Scotch writers have contributed to the value and the importance of literature. In the various departments of History, Philosophy, Science, Poetry,

^e For numerous proofs see Dr. Whitaker's Review of Gibbon's Roman History, 8vo. 1791.

and Criticism, they have exerted themselves with no less talents than diligence. The first publications of some of them were marked by those national peculiarities, which in succeeding editions have been corrected. Hume, Robertson, and Blair, by careful revisions have refined and polished their works, which in the general estimation of the public, very deservedly occupy a place among the most distinguished productions of the British press.

If there be any writers who endeavour to vitiate our language; if they deliberately hasten its decline by adding to its corruptions, they are just objects of censure: and unless their deviations from its idiom be remarked and avoided, how can the distinction between a pure and an adulterated style be preserved? Without attention to some rules, without some bounds are set to capricious innovation, the language will degenerate, and the sterling ore of the English tongue will finally lose its value, and its lustre, by being mixed with the dross of French frivolousness, and the alloy of learned affectation.

The Subject continued.

CHAPTER III.

OUR language ought to be considered not only with a view to its grammatical propriety, but as a subject of taste. In order to avoid the errors of those who have been led astray by affectation and false refinement, and to form a proper opinion of its genuine idiom, it is necessary to peruse the works of the best and most approved writers.

In the various departments of religion, history, poetry, and general literature, we will endeavour to point out some writers of the purest English—but without any wish to detract from the excellence of those, whom the limited nature of our work, and not ignorance of their merits, or prejudice against them, may incline us to omit.

Let the reader commence his studies with those who were most distinguished in the reign of Elizabeth, when the language began to be refined from its original roughness, assumed a fuller form, and was marked by more distinct features; and let him pursue his progress down to the present times. Nor ought he to be deterred from this design by an apprehension, that he will find our old authors clothed in the garb of rude and uncouth antiquity; for

for he will make the pleasing discovery, that shaded as the language of his forefathers may be by some obscurities, yet it does not materially differ from his own, in point of structure and formation, or the meaning of the generality of words.

The *substance* of a language remains for ages unaltered, however the influx of new customs, and the inventions or the improvements of arts, may occasion some addition to its terms, and some change in its orthography and pronunciation. *Shakespeare* will of course attract his early attention; and he will find in his incomparable dramas such an accommodation of style to the grave and the gay, the rough and the polished, the heroic and the vulgar characters of his plays, as shews that our language was sufficiently strong and copious to be a proper vehicle for all the wonderful conceptions of his genius. The Chronicle of *Speed*, the History of the World by Sir *Walter Raleigh*, the History of the grand Rebellion by Lord *Clarendon*, and the Works of Sir *William Temple*, are deserving perusal for vigour and compass of diction, as well as the display of talents and knowledge. The common translation of *the Bible*, made in the reign of James I., exclusive of the important nature of its contents, deserves great attention. The nature and compass of its phraseology are such, as prove no less the powers of the language than the correct judgment of the translators. The words are, for the most part, elegant and expressive, and convey the sublime ideas of the original,

original, without coarseness or vulgarity on the one hand, or pedantry and affectation on the other. The manly and dignified prose, and the rich and sublime poetry of *Milton*, far from being degraded or fettered, are exalted and adorned by their style; and it was his peculiar glory, to apply with consummate taste and skill the flowing periods of blank verse, to the majesty of an epic poem. The increasing tribute of praise, in every age except his own, has been paid to the flights of his transcendent genius, and the stores of his vast erudition.

Dr. *Isaac Barrow* flourished in the reign of Charles II. His Sermons are matchless: his periods are so full and exuberant, as to give no inadequate representation of the eloquence of Cicero. He exhausts every subject which he undertakes to discuss, leaving nothing but admiration of the fertility of his mind, to the writers who follow him upon the same topics. They display to the greatest advantage the energy of his intellectual powers, employed upon the most important subjects.

The great *Locke*, in a plain and severe style, well adapted to the philosophical precision of his researches, unravelled the intricacies of the most interesting branch of philosophy by tracing ideas to their source, and developing the faculties of the mind. In the illustrious reign of Anne, when Britain reached an eminent degree of glory in literature as well as in war, *Swift* valued himself on using no words but such as were of native English growth:
in

in clear and familiar diction he expressed the full freedom of an active mind, and never wrote with so much pleasure as when he indulged his talent for irony. So averse was he to the flowers of eloquence, that it has been said that metaphors are thinly scattered over his writings. Yet who will presume to censure the author of *Gulliver's Travels* for want of imagination? *Addison*, the accomplished scholar, the refined critic, and the enlightened moralist, like another *Socrates* brought moral philosophy from the schools, arrayed her in the most engaging dress, and called the attention of his countrymen to taste and to virtue, in his elegant and entertaining essays^f. The prefaces of *Dryden* are marked by the ease and the vivacity of genius; and there is a facility in his rhymes, and a peculiar vigour in his poetry, which render him justly the boast of our country. *Pope* composed his prefaces and letters with peculiar grace and beauty of style; and his poems present the finest specimens of exquisite judgment, adorned with the most polished versification.

The works of *Melmoth*, particularly his letters

^f As I have been from early life an enthusiastic admirer of *Addison*, considered as a moral writer, I cannot characterise his merits in a manner more correspondent with my original feelings of respect, than by applying to him the sentiments which *Erasmus* has expressed of *Cicero*. "Certe nunquam mihi magis placuit *Cicero* tum, quum adamarem illa studia, quam nunc placet seni: non tantum ob divinam quandam orationis felicitatem, verum etiam ob pectoris eruditi sanctimoniam, profecto meum afflavit animum, ineque mihi reddidit meliorem."

and translations of Cicero and Pliny, are remarkable for smoothness and elegance of composition. The Lectures of *Sir Joshua Reynolds* illustrate the principles of his delightful art, in a manner no less creditable to him as a fine writer, than as an eminent painter and connoisseur. The sacred discourses of the amiable *Bishop Horne* recommend the duties of that holy religion, of which he was so bright an ornament, in a sweet and lively style. The manly vigour of *Bishop Watson* diffuses its animation through all his works, whether philosophical, controversial, or religious. And where can we find compositions, which unite the politeness of the gentleman with the attainments of the scholar, blended in juster proportions, than in the *Polymetis* of *Spence*, the *Athenian Letters*, the Dialogues of *Lord Littelton* and *Bishop Hurd*, and the papers of the *Adventurer*, and the *Observer*?

Johnson's Lives of the Poets, if some allowance be made for his prejudices against Milton and Gray, merit great attention, and contain as many excellent principles of morality as of taste. They will give useful hints to a young man as to the conduct of life; and shew him that frequently the powers of genius, and the rage of dissipation have been united in the favourites of the muses. Whence he may infer that a sound judgment is more desirable than a fine imagination, and that abilities without prudence may gain the laurels of Parnassus,

but cannot secure their possessor from disgrace or penury^s.

These are some of the principal sources, from which may be derived a proper knowledge of the purity, the strength, and the copiousness of the English language. Such are the examples, by which our style ought to be regulated. In them may be remarked the idiomatic structure of sentences, and the proper arrangements of their parts. They present specimens of purity without stiffness, and elegance without affectation; they are free both from pompous and vulgar diction, and their authors have the happy art of pleasing our taste, while they improve our understandings, and confirm our principles of morality and religion.

In the course of this perusal it will be found, that in proportion as the great controversies upon religion and politics began to subside since the time of the Revolution, a greater attention has been paid to the niceties of grammar and criticism; and coarse and barbarous phraseology has been gradually polished into propriety and elegance.

As the practice of writing for public inspection has been much improved since the period above-mentioned, a remarkable change has taken place.

^s See the Rev. W. Jones's excellent Advice to a Young Man.

The long parenthesis, which so frequently occurs in the older writers, to the great embarrassment and perplexity of their meaning, has fallen much into disuse. It has been observed, that it is no where to be found in the writings of Johnson. Authors have shortened their sentences, which, in some of the best writers of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century, were extended to an excessive length^b: and they have stated their thoughts to much more advantage by separating them from each other, and expressing them with greater distinctness. The custom of writing in short sentences must be allowed to detract from roundness of period, and dignity of composition: but it certainly contributes so materially to perspicuity, which is the prime excellence of style, that it cannot fail to make every reader satisfied with the change.

Many who write only as they are prompted by some transient subject of the day, endeavour to catch public attention by affected and modish language. A popular speaker, and particularly a member of the House of Commons, enjoys a kind of privilege

^b See the first sentence of Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. The second sentence of Milton's "Reformation" in England runs to 29½ folio lines, divided into nearly as many members; the first sentence of his second Book against Prelacy is 18½ lines folio in length. There is a sentence in Bolingbroke's Philosophy, Essay i. sect. 2. which is 22 lines octavo in length; and there is another in Swift's Letter to the Lord Treasurer nearly as long.

to coin as many words as he pleases ; and they no sooner receive the sanction of his authority than they intrude upon us from every quarter in letters, plays, and periodical publications. But such words resemble the flies that are seen sporting in the sun only for a day, and afterwards appear no more. The people of fashion, ever fickle and fond of novelty, are as prompt to reject as they were to adopt them ; and they seldom long survive the occasion that gave them birth.

But a correct writer neither countenances by his approbation, nor authorises by his practice, such words as have only novelty to recommend them ; whether they are introduced by the noble or the vulgar, the learned or the ignorant. Upon these occasions a good taste will prove the surest guide. He conforms to idiom and analogy ; and at the same time that he confesses his obligations to those Grammarians, who have attempted to reduce his native language to a classical standard, he forgets not what it is of great importance for an Englishman to recollect, that the “ pure wells of English undefiled ” are supplied by a Saxon source ; and that the genius of the British language, like the spirit of the British people, disdains to be too much encroached upon by arbitrary and foreign innovations.

In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold,
 Alike fantastic, if too new or old.
 Be not the first by whom the new are try'd,
 Nor yet the last to lay the old aside ⁱ.

ⁱ Pope on Criticism.

I. *Pronunciation.*

Our remarks have been generally applied to the English, considered as a written language: but books have a much more extensive use, than merely to regulate the practice of writers; for they are calculated to make conversation both accurate and pure. There will always be less variation of speech prevailing among the natives of different provinces, and less vulgarity of dialect, in proportion as well-written books are circulated and perused.

Difficult as it may be to fix the pronunciation of a language, it is evident that without some permanent standard, it is as liable to change as any fashion whatever. Two of the most obvious rules seem to be, that every articulate sound to be expressed should have its proper letter or letters to represent it: and that the letters appropriated to one sound should never be used to express another. These laws for the correct pronunciation of language should be practised and recommended by persons of liberal education, and their example should furnish a rule to the public at large; for it is well remarked by Quintilian, that the consent of the learned, and not the practice of the populace, ought to give the law to conversation. Much depends upon the rank and respectability of those who sanction any practice whatever: numerous anomalies, it is true, may have become so deeply rooted, that

that it is too late to extirpate them: If however they cannot be removed, at least vigilance may expose their number, and care may prevent their increase. To point out errors is the first step to correction, and this task has been ably executed by the acute and diligent author of “the Elements of Orthoepy,” whose work has suggested some of these observations, and furnished others. Foreigners complain, that our pronunciation is so much at variance with our mode of spelling, that it is long before they can converse in English without running the risk of being guilty of some impropriety. We have too much reason to concur with them in this complaint, as we must in some instances be as sensible of its reasonableness as themselves. Our pronunciation is often governed by such caprice, that we have sounds sometimes expressed by one character, and sometimes by another: many letters in our alphabet serve to express many sounds very differently from those to which they are regularly appropriated, and many combinations of letters are still more vague and unsettled^k. From whatever quarter these irregularities first arose, whether from the Court or the Stage, they soon became established by common usage. There are many words which, if pro-

^k The proofs of this last observation are too remarkable to be omitted. The combination *-ough* has *nine* different powers, as in 1. hiccough; 2. bough; 3. dough; 4. cough; 5. lough; 6. tough; 7. through; 8. thorough; 9. thought. They are pronounced like 1. up; 2. ou; 3. o long; 4. auf; 5. ock; 6. uff; 7. oo long; 8. o short; 9. aut. Nares, p. 14.

nounced

nounced exactly as they are written, would in many companies subject a person to the charge of affectation or vulgarity¹. He must be guided by the prevailing fashion of the times, and look upon the pronunciation of his Ancestors of only half a century ago as obsolete as their drefs, with the high probability, that ere many years shall elapse, the same observation may be applicable to the present times. The analogy, however, between drefs and language is not perhaps very close, for it may be remarked, at least with regard to our own country, that although the fashion in drefs which prevailed in former times has of late years in some respects been revived; yet that part of the assurance of Horace, which promises the renovation of antiquated words, is not found to be warranted by experience^m.

We must here conclude our observations on a language, which by the commerce, the conquests,

¹ Such as *nature*, *superior*, *sugar*, *education*, *insuperable*. It is not unusual to say *chune* for *tune*, *chumid* for *tumid*, *chumult* for *tumult*, *fortchune* for *fortune*, *covetchous* for *covetous*, *banister* for *baluster*, from *ballustrade*: *Bedlum* for *Bethlehem*, *cheney* for *china*, *constler* for *construe*, *hatchment* for *atchievement*, *hapenny* for *halfpenny*, *hern* for *heron*, *hunderd* for *hundred*, *marchant* for *merchant*, *fallet* for *fallad*, *flake* for *steak*, *scrutore* for *escrutoire*, *sparrowgrass* for *asparagus*, *woond* for *wound*, &c. &c. See Nares, p. 266.

^m Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentq;

Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus

Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.

Ars Poet. l. 70.

and the colonies of the English, is at present very generally diffused, and probably is spoken at this day by not less than twenty millions of persons in the various parts of the globe. Its reputation seems to increase more and more, as it is of late years become the favourite study of many foreigners, who wish to complete a liberal education. And indeed it may be said, without partiality, to merit their particular attention; since it contains some of the choicest treasures of the human mind, and is the vehicle of such intellectual vigour, warmth of imagination, depth of erudition, and research of philosophy, as can with difficulty be equalled in any other nation.

The prevalence and flourishing state of our language depend not solely upon the inhabitants of the British dominions in Europe. In many of the islands of the West Indies it is cultivated with diligence. Our extensive and still increasing settlements in the East Indies promise to insure its preservation, and open a spacious field for its wider diffusion. The United States of America cannot fail to preserve the language of their parent country; and in proportion as the spirit of literary research rises among them, the study of those English publications will be encouraged, from which the Americans have acquired their knowledge of legislation, and their principles of liberty.

When we consider the uncertainty and the fluctuating nature of all human affairs, and particularly

ticularly the great mutability of language, we cannot help giving way to the melancholy reflection, that the time *may* arrive, when the English, which at present appears so durable and permanent, as the standard of conversation and writing, will become obsolete. The caprices of fashion, the wide extent of our commerce, the general intercourse with other nations, and more particularly the predominance of the French language may produce great changes; and Hume and Johnson, Pope and Goldsmith, may become what Speed and Ascham, Chaucer and Phaer, are at present. We cannot, however, think that the understanding and the taste of mankind will be likely so far to degenerate, as to suffer works of intrinsic merit ever to sink into oblivion; on the contrary, we are inclined to cherish the pleasing expectation, that the best productions of our writers, ranked with the admired classics of Greece and Rome, will be carefully preserved for general improvement and pleasure, and will convey the treasures of genius, learning, and philosophy, to the most distant ages and generations.

CHAPTER IV.

The Latin Language.

A KNOWLEDGE of this language introduces us to many of those works, which are deservedly classed among the most elegant productions of the human mind, and are considered as some of the most correct models of literary excellence. If we estimate its comparative value and importance, it claims a place immediately after our own tongue; as not only the Roman writers have made it the vehicle of their genius, but it has been distinguished since the revival of learning, by the productions of many eminent authors.

The utility of an acquaintance with this language will be more immediately apparent, if we consider how much our own is indebted to it for many of the terms of art and science, as well as for most of our polysyllables. Without its assistance, it is not only difficult to understand our Authors, but to write or speak even a sentence of elegant English; so that when we are engaged in studying the Latin, we are in fact making ourselves more perfect masters of our own language. It is equally useful, if we wish to acquire the French, the Italian, and the Spanish, as it constitutes so material a part of those elegant tongues. It is the

prolific mother of many children; and whatever difference may prevail among them with respect to the various countries, in which they are settled, or the foreign alliances they have formed, they discover the parent from which they sprung, by the most striking similarity of features.

Considered with respect to its *origin*, the Latin language derived many words from the Etruscans and Sabines: it is however, for the most part, a very ancient branch of the Greek, and is chiefly formed from the Doric and Eolic dialects. From the Eolic genitive in *οιο* was formed the Latin genitive in *i*. From the genitive in *ων* were formed the feminine plurals in *arum*. The Roman S supplied the place of the Eolic Digamma F, as in *semis*, *sus*, *super*, *sub*, *sylva*, as V did in *vis*, *venter*, *vinum*, *vicus*, &c. From the Doric *α* for *η* are derived the words of the first declension. From the third person plural in *οις* for *ους* was formed the Latin third person plural in *unt*. A colony of Arcadians under Enotrus are said to have introduced Greek into Italy many centuries before the Trojan war. As Latin was separated from the mother tongue at so very early a period, it was deficient in that melody and sweetness which the other dialects acquired, when Greek afterwards reached its greatest perfectionⁿ.

Not

ⁿ "Muretus non dubitavit dicere, eos qui Græci sermonis expertes sint, ne Latina quidem scripta penitus percipere posse. Ipse vir summus Hemsterhusius sese in Latinis intelligendis sic a Græcis

Not only innumerable words, but the ancient forms of the Roman letters, prove the origin of the language to have been Grecian. From the same source it derived progressive improvements. The earliest Latin poets, Pacuvius, Ennius, and Plautus, modelled their works upon the Grecian plan, as is particularly evident from their frequent use of compound words. As soon as the art of public speaking began to be cultivated in Rome, the Greek language, which contained some of the richest treasures of eloquence, became a favourite object of pursuit. The attention which was paid to the productions of Greece by the Romans when advancing towards refinement, sufficiently marks the high estimation, in which their literature was held. Cato, the Censor, at a late period of life learned the elements of that language; and Pompey, when Consul, as a mark of distinguished respect to a Greek philosopher, ordered his fasces to be lowered to Posidonius the sophist, whom he visited in his school at Rhodes. Greece was to Rome, what Egypt had been in more remote times to Greece, the fruitful parent of her literature and arts.

The Latin yields the superiority to the Greek language, not only with regard to melody of sound, but compass of expression. It has no dual num-

a Græcis adjuvari sentiebat, ut interdum negaret, poetas eos qui se totos ad Græcorum imitationem contulissent, nominatim Propertium et Horatium, Græce imperitis valde placere posse." Prolegom. ad Etymologicum Lennep. p. 6.

ber,

ber, and has only one tense to denote the past perfect; but the Greek can express this equally by the preterperfect, and the aorist. The Latin has not a past participle active: whereas in Greek there are two, namely, the participle of the aorist, and the preterperfect. It wants likewise a present participle passive, which reduces writers to great inconvenience, and occasions much awkwardness and uncertainty of expression. It is deficient in a middle voice, and an optative mood, marked by a peculiar termination, to distinguish it from the subjunctive.

The Romans did not, in imitation of the Greeks, introduce *the article* into their language. This is one of its striking defects. The importance of the article in fixing the meaning of a word to a precise idea will appear from the following, or any similar instance. Suppose in Latin the words *Filius Regis* to occur in any author: Do they mean *a son of a King*, *the son of a King*, or *the son of the King*? each of which expressions conveys a very different idea. The exact sense of *Filius Regis* must intirely depend upon the context; as the expression is in itself vague and indefinite. The modern languages of Europe have the advantage over the Latin in this part of speech, however inferior they may be in other respects.

In the different inflections and terminations of words, as well as in the delicate and pleasing denominations of objects by diminutives, Greek and
Latin

Latin bear a strong resemblance to each other. The Latin possesses compound words, but in a degree that will hardly admit of comparison with the Greek. It is equally happy in denoting by particular verbs the frequent repetition or commencement of actions ; and it is more accurate in its power of expressing certain modifications of time by gerunds and supines.

With respect to composition, the productions of the Latin classics are ranked next in order of excellence to those of the Greek. The polished writers of Rome, disdaining to follow the plain and inartificial manner of their older authors, imitated the varied pauses and harmonious flow of Grecian periods. In one kind of arrangement, the Romans were inferior to their great masters, as they frequently closed their sentences with verbs. This practice sometimes runs through several sentences together, with no small degree of tiresome uniformity ; as is evident from many passages in the history of Livy, the Orations of Cicero, and the Commentaries of Cæsar. In defence however of this custom it may be remarked, that as the action expressed by the verb is frequently the most emphatic idea, it might be thought most consistent with the genius of their composition, to place it at the close of the period, for the purpose of more effectually keeping up the attention of the hearer or reader.

From considering the beauties of composition so
conspicuous

conspicuous in the works of the classics, we must be sensible of the unfavourable light, in which they appear when viewed through the medium of *Translations*. They are exposed to the vanity, the negligence, or the ignorance of the translator: and are liable to be injured by his fastidiousness, or his want of taste. The sense of an original work may be debased by servile fidelity of version, or enervated by unrestrained freedom of expression; it may be compressed into an abridgment, or dilated into a commentary.

Sometimes a translator flatters himself he can improve upon his original, as is attempted in the following instance. Virgil describes Venus after her appearance to Æneas as visiting Paphos:

— — Ubi templum illi, centumque Sabæo
Thure calent aræ, fertilisque recentibus halant.

For which a French Translator substitutes these lines :

*Dans ce Temple ou toujours quelque amant irrité,
Accuse dans ses vœux quelque jeune beauté.*

Because he thinks this description is more characteristic of the Temple of Venus than that given by Virgil, which he says will apply equally well to the Temples of other Deities. Had he understood the spirit of the passage, and known that blood was never shed upon the altar of the Paphian goddess, and that its *peculiar* ornaments were garlands of flowers,

flowers, he might have spared himself the pains of endeavouring to *improve* upon Virgil.

The Translation of Virgil by Dryden is in some instances carelessly executed, yet it is the carelessness of a Man who entered fully into the spirit of his original, and could convey it in the most expressive language, whenever he chose. He saw “that closeness best preserved an Author’s sense, and that freedom best exhibited his spirit, he therefore will deserve the highest praise, who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who, when he translates, changes nothing but the language.”

As a proof of the excellence of this remark, take the following description of the rapid march of a Roman army:

Non fecus ac patriis acer Romanus in armis
Injusto sub fasce viam cum carpit, et hosti
Ante expectatum positus stat in agmine castris ^p.

Which Dryden has thus rendered—

Thus, under heavy arms, the youth of Rome
Their long laborious marches overcome,
Chearly their tedious travels undergo,
And pitch their sudden camp before the foe.

To judge how well this is executed, compare it with a recent translation.

• Johnson’s Idler, No. 69.

^p Georg. 3. l. 346.

Not

Not otherwise in arms untaught to yield
 Rome's burden'd soldiers seek the iron field,
 And fix e'er fame's swift voice prevents their way,
 Mid unsuspecting foes their war array.

In the former passage, the description is clear and complete, in the latter it is obscure and paraphrastic; and the most important circumstance of all is omitted *positis castris*, which conveys an astonishing idea of the rapid and dauntless operations of the Roman legions.

Dryden has sometimes taken the liberty of substituting one image for another, but with singular propriety and spirit. Take for instance the beautiful apostrophe to Nisus and Euryalus:

O happy friends! for if my verse can give
 Immortal life, your fame shall ever live,
 Fix'd as the Capitol's foundation lies,
 And spread where'er the Roman Eagle flies^a.

But after all, may we not apply to Translations, the remark made by Philip of Macedon to a person who prided himself upon imitating the notes of the Nightingale? *I prefer the Nightingale herself.*

The defects and difficulties of the translator are increased by the inferiority of his language. The

^a "Fortunati ambo, si quid mea carmina possint!
 Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo,
 Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
 Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit."

classics are characterised by a native elegance and dignity of thought, a peculiar precision of style, a copious flow of period, and a regular construction of sentence: in addition to which their poetical works are adorned with the harmony of numbers and the various beauties of metrical versification. The modern languages possess some of these beauties in an inferior degree, and of others they are totally destitute. If therefore the flowers of eloquence and poetry, which bloom in the fields of Cicero and Virgil, be transplanted into a less genial soil, and a colder climate, their vigour declines, and they lose the brightness of their colours, and the richness of their fragrance^r.

The fragments of the annals of the Pontiffs, and the laws of the Twelve Tables, are sufficient to prove the rude and imperfect state of the Latin language, during the early times of the republic. Two of the first historians of Rome composed their works in Greek: and even Brutus, the contemporary of Cicero, wrote his epistles in the same

^r My own practice may afford an apt illustration of the inferiority of a translation to an original: for I have represented in feeble English the just and beautiful observations which Gravina, an eminent writer of Latin, has conveyed in strong and Ciceronian periods. (Opusc. p. 183.)

Ce qu'il y a de plus délicat dans les pensées, et dans les expressions des auteurs, qui ont écrit avec beaucoup de justesse, se perd quand on les veut mettre dans une autre langue: à-peu-près comme ces essences exquisés, dont le parfum subtil s'évapore quand on les verse d'un vase dans un autre. Bohours, *Perfées Ingénieuses*, p. 195.

language.

language. That great orator wrote a Greek History of his own consulship; and his friend Atticus produced a Greek work upon the same subject. The Latin was not only for a considerable time an unpolished, but a defective language. Its poverty of expression was a subject of complaint, as soon as it began to be regularly studied. Cicero and Lucretius were sensible of the want of terms adapted to philosophical topics. Even the names of physics, dialectics, and rhetoric, were unknown before the former of these authors introduced them into his works; and the latter laments that his native tongue was not calculated to communicate with adequate strength and copiousness of expression, the wonders and the beauties of Grecian philosophy. Its defects were not so great, when applied to subjects more congenial to the manners of the Romans. From their constant occupations in domestic and foreign wars for many centuries, their language took a deep and peculiar tincture, and the marks of it were evident from many modes of expression. *Virtus*, for instance, denotes virtue as well as courage; *Exercitus*, which signifies an army, conveys likewise in its original import the idea of strong bodily exercise; *Imperator*, originally appropriated to a general, was afterwards applied to the supreme civil magistrate of the empire; and the term *Hostis*, which was employed in contradistinction to a native of Rome, in its primary meaning, denoted a stranger^s. The Roman

^s *Hostis* enim apud majores nostros is dicebatur, quem nunc
L 2 *peregrinum*

gentlemen were called *Equites*, which had a reference to the military service performed on horseback by persons of their quality, in the early ages of the commonwealth, when a soldier and a citizen were the same.

I. *Latin Classics.*

It might naturally enough be supposed, on comparing the Comedies of Plautus with those of Terence, and the Poems of Lucretius with Virgil, that they had lived at the distance of several centuries from each other: and yet they were in reality separated by no long interval of time. Plautus flourished about thirty years before Terence, and Lucretius about fifty before Virgil. The rapid progress of the Latin tongue to perfection will appear less extraordinary, when we remark the labour bestowed upon its cultivation by persons as eminent for their taste and learning, as for their rank and talents. Scipio Africanus was the assistant of Terence in his comic productions; and Cicero and Cæsar promoted the improvement and refinement of their language, not only by examples of correctness in their inimitable writings, but by composing treatises on grammar.

peregrinum dicimus. Inducant 12 tabulæ, aut status dies cum hoste, &c. Cicero de Officiis, lib. i. c. 12.

Virtus is probably derived from vis or vir, as *Αρετή* is from *Αρετή*. “Virtute semper prævalet sapientia.” Phædrus.

All

All the Latin authors, who were remarkable for pure and elegant diction, flourished within the space of a century and a half, viz. from the time of Scipio Africanus to the death of Augustus. During that period, it was evident with what great success the Roman language could be adapted to every species of composition. The prose writer expanded his ideas in flowing periods, or condensed them into concise sentences. The poet adapted the various kinds of metre to the melodious notes of the lyre, or, aided by the fancied inspiration of the epic muse, poured forth the more regular numbers of heroic song.

The purest, and as it is sometimes called the golden age of Latin composition, commenced with **TERENCE**, who introduced the characters of his elegant comedies, conversing in terse and perspicuous language. **LUCRETIVS** gave to the Epicurean philosophy the wild but captivating charms of a vigorous fancy, and nervous expression. His versification is sometimes rough and unpolished, and sometimes rises into so much grace and smoothness as to resemble the hexameters of Virgil. The principal instances that confirm this assertion are, the beautiful exordium of his poem, his description of the mansions of the Gods, and his highly fanciful account of the origin of music from the singing of birds^t. There is a wild sublimity

^t Lib. iii. l. 18. &c. Lib. v. l. 1377.

and originality diffused over his whole work. His pictures of nature are enchanting; but his doctrine of atoms, which adhere to each other by chance, is too absurd to require a serious refutation. As a genuine poet it was in vain for him to affect the character of an Atheist; he felt the necessity of some divine agency to animate the mass of his subject: he has therefore, with a display of the most elegant imagery, and with a grace and majesty suitable to the occasion, opened his poem with an address to the Goddess of Love, ascribed to her the creation of the world, invested her with the attributes of power and goodness, and assigned to her the controul of all human affairs.

Improving upon the versification of Lucretius, VIRGIL introduced the Mantuan Shepherds into his Eclogues, conversing in refined dialogues: in his Georgics, agriculture, and every subject connected with it, are described in the most polished language; and his Eneid, abounding with beautiful descriptions and incidents, completes his character as the most eminent of Latin poets. Whenever he indulges the genuine feelings of nature, and describes the effects of the tender passions, he is peculiarly delicate, captivating, and pathetic; but he seldom ascends to sublimity of thought, without having Homer in view. CICERO, the pride of Rome, and a model of true eloquence, adapted his style to every species of prose composition: in his letters he was easy and familiar; upon subjects of philosophy and eloquence he enriched the diction, while he enlightened

enlightened the minds of his countrymen; in the character of a public speaker, he gave beauty, pathos, and energy, to his native language; he adorned it with the brightest ornaments, and infused into it the united powers of extensive learning and eminent talents. His copious and exuberant style resembles the large and flowing garments, that were thrown by the sculptor over the statues of the gods, and which, far from pressing and confining their bodies, gave free exercise to their limbs, and superior gracefulness to their motion". CORNELIUS NEPOS, the friend of Cicero, has shewn his congenial taste by the easy and unaffected style, in which he has recorded the lives of eminent persons of his own country and of Greece. The Commentaries of CÆSAR are valuable no less for accuracy and liveliness of narrative, than for the purest simplicity of language. HORACE suited the colours of his composition to the nature of his various subjects: in his Odes, he has sometimes the ease of

" Velleius Paterculus, in his encomium on Cicero, defines with elegance and precision the limits of the golden age of Latinity. " *Oratio et vis forensis perfectumque profæ eloquentiæ decus ita sub principe operis sui erupit Tullio, ut delectari ante eum paucissimis; admirari vero neminem possis, nisi ab illo visum; aut qui illum viderit.*" Lib. i. c. 17. Gravina caught the same spirit of elegant observation, when he remarked, " *Mirum esset si hunc scriptorem non haberem eximium, quo nemo est auctior in eloquentia Latina, et in omni sermonis elegantia locupletior, nemo splendidior, nemo uberius, nemo in omni eruditione celebrior: nemo denique de quo cum tot laudes sint diffusæ, minus tamen pro illius dignitate sit dictum,*" p. 180. De Lat. Linguâ.

Anacreon, and sometimes the sublimity of Pindar. In his style he is more perspicuous, and in subjects more varied than the Bard of Thebes. The Prophecy of Nereus, the speeches of Juno to the Gods, and of Regulus to the Romans, and the Ode to Melpomene are effusions of matchless spirit and beauty^w. If we recollect that he has written Odes which may dispute the palm with the bards of Greece, Satires full of pleasing raillery, Epistles which contain the best lectures on men and manners, and an Art of Poetry which is the code of criticism and refined taste;—if we observe his good sense, the harmony of his numbers, and the versatility of his genius; it will surely be admitted that he possessed the most ample powers to instruct and to delight mankind. Perhaps there is no classic, who pleases us more, or pleases us so long. He has charms for persons of every age: by the young scholar he is read with delight, and by the old he is rarely forgot^x. OVID, CATULLUS, and TIBULLUS, poured forth their poetical effusions in full and clear streams of description. PHÆDRUS, by his neat and expressive versification of the Fables of Æsop, proved that Iambic measure was suited to the genius of the Latin tongue. LIVY gave the most finished graces to historical composition; and it is difficult to determine whether he most

^w Ode xv. Lib. i. Ode iii. Lib. iii. Ode v. Lib. iii. Ode iii. Lib. iv.

^x See La Harpe's Lectures at the Lyceum, and Warton's Essay on Pope, vol. i. p. 397.

excels in the clearness of his descriptions, or the appropriate eloquence of his speeches. Learning has sustained an irreparable injury in the loss of the concluding, and the most interesting part of his work, which related to the civil wars of Cæsar with Pompey, and of Antony and Octavius with Brutus and Cassius, subjects which admitted the most advantageous display of his talents for historical painting, and shewed his zeal for truth, and his ardour in the cause of the republic; an ardour the more honourable for him to avow, as at the time he wrote he was favoured with the smiles of Augustus. The moralizing prefaces of SALLUST to his accounts of the conspiracy of Cataline, and the Jugurthine war, are instructive; and many of his descriptions are strong and lively, particularly that of the death of Cataline; and yet, by his affectation of concise and obsolete expressions, he discovered signs of the approaching extinction of classical purity of style.

The high reputation acquired by these writers,

Y “How cometh it to pass, that Cæsar and Cicero’s talk is so natural and plain, and Sallust’s writing so artificial and dark, when all the three lived at one time? I will freely tell you my fancy herein. Surely Cæsar and Cicero, beside a singular prerogative of natural eloquence given unto them by God; both two, by use of life, were daily orators among the common people, and greatest counsellors in the senate-house; and therefore gave themselves to use such speeches as the meanest should well understand, and the wisest best allow: following carefully that good counsel of Aristotle, *Loquendum ut multi, sapiendum ut pauci.*”

Ascham’s Schoolmaster, p. 339.

whose

whose praise has been the favourite theme of every polished age, results from combining in their works the genuine beauties of elegant composition. However they may differ in the direction of their talents, the nature of their subjects, and the style of their productions, there is still a congenial taste conspicuous in all their writings, which are marked by such perspicuous and elegant language, and animated by such propriety and vigour of thought, as can only be well understood and fully relished by frequent perusal and attentive observation; and the extreme difficulty of reaching the standard of excellence, which they have erected, is sufficiently manifest from the small number of modern writers, who have imitated them with any considerable degree of success ^z.

To

^z Strictior Calvus, numerosior Asinius, splendidior Cæsar, amarior Cælius, gravior Brutus, vehementior et plenior et valentior Cicero; omnes tamen eandem sanitatem eloquentiæ ferunt, ut si omnium pariter libros in manum sumseris, scias, quamvis in diversis ingeniis, esse quandam judicii et voluntatis similitudinem et cognationem. Dialog. de Oratoribus, c. xxv.

The engaging gracefulness of the Sulpicia of Tibullus, apparent in all her actions, her dress, and whole demeanour, corresponds with the native beauty of the classics, diversified by so many forms, and under every appearance inexpressibly beautiful and captivating.

Illam quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia flectit,

Componit furtim, subsequiturque decor;

Seu solvit crines; fufis decet esse capillis;

Seu comit, comitis est veneranda comis.

Urit, seu Tyria voluit procedere palla,

Urit, seu nivea candida veste venit.

Talis

To follow the steps of Grecian authors was the general practice of the Romans. Each of them found some predecessor who had led the way to the fields of invention, and was therefore adopted as the instructor of his inexperienced genius, and his guide to eminence and fame. The assistance which Homer, Hesiod, and the tragedians, afforded to Virgil, was similar to that which in other branches of composition Pindar, Archilochus, Alcæus, and Sappho gave to Horace; Menander to Terence; Plato and Demosthenes to Cicero; Polybius to Livy; and Thucydides to Sallust. As a copy must from its own nature be inferior to the original, they have all fallen short in point of originality

Talis in æterno felix Vertumnus Olympo,

Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

Tibull. lib. iv. carm. 2. ed. Heyne.

Whate'er Sulpicia does, where'er she roves,

A guardian grace attends her as she moves;

If float her careless tresses in the wind,

Or if in closer braids her locks she binds;

Each varying mode some decency imparts,

To gain the empire of the gazer's hearts.

Whether in purple robe of state array'd

Walks with slow step Sulpicia, lovely maid,

Or if she glide, adorn'd in snowy vest,

That thinly veils her far more snowy breast,

Still the same native elegance conspires

To waken, Cupid, thy most ardent fires;

Thus on the high Olympus, seat of Jove,

Shines in her sphere the laughing Queen of Love;

A thousand modes to dress her charms she tries,

And thousand beauties from each mode arise.

and

and fervour of composition. The poets are more particularly remarkable for enriching themselves with foreign treasures; and as so many of their obligations to the Greeks, whose works are still extant, are discovered; it is perhaps the less unfair for us to conclude, that the Romans were very deeply indebted to those, whose works have not escaped the ravages of time. The want of originality was in some measure, although imperfectly, supplied by judgment and taste. The rules of criticism were studied when various kinds of literature were cultivated at Rome; for Horace wrote his Art of Poetry nearly at the same time Virgil was composing his Eneid. Too close an attachment to their great masters made the Romans servile followers, rather than daring and free adventurers. If however we consider the manners of the nation, their dignity of character, their undaunted spirit, their love of freedom, and the great improvements they made upon other foreign inventions; particularly upon the arts of government and war; we may safely pronounce, that they would have approached much nearer to perfection, and would have taken a nobler and a sublimer flight, if they had trusted less to the genius of Greece, and more to the enthusiasm of nature.

II. *Decline of the Language.*

The decay of taste, which extended its influence to the productions of the fine arts, prevailed likewise

wife in works of literature. In the writers who flourished after the Augustan age, this circumstance is remarkable, although we should be deficient in justice not to acknowledge that they possess a considerable share of beautiful imagery, lively description, and just observation, both in poetry and prose. Seneca degraded the dignity of his moral treatises by sentences too pointed, and ornaments of rhetoric too numerous and studied; and Pliny gave too laboured and epigrammatic a turn to his Epistles. Lucan indulged the extravagance and wildness of his genius in puerile flights of fancy; and Tacitus fettered the powers of his judgment, and obscured the brightness of his imagination by elaborate brevity, and dark and distant allusions^a. Such affectation

^a The character given by Pliny to Timanthes may be justly applied to Tacitus: "In omnibus ejus operibus *intelligitur* plus semper quam *pingitur*; et cum ars summa sit, ingenium tamen ultra artem est." Lib. xxxv. c. 10.

"A man who could join the brilliant wit, and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection, and good sense of the best moderns, cannot choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit of liberty, that every now and then breaks out, as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his *Agricola*, that (concise as it is) I always admired, for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of *Agricola*, where he had made him coheir with his wife and daughter, 'Satis constabat lætatum eum velut honore judicioque; tam cæca et corrupta mens assiduis adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum principem.'" Gray's Letters to West.

was in vain substituted for the charms of nature and simplicity. So fruitless is the attempt to supply, by gaudy ornaments of dress, and artificial beauty of complexion, the want of genuine charms, and the native bloom of youth.

QUINTILIAN, in an incomparable work, written to give directions for the complete education of a Roman orator, and abounding with the purest principles of judgment, and the choicest treasures of learning and experience, endeavoured to direct the attention of his countrymen to the ancient models of composition. But the weeds of a bad taste were too deeply and too widely sown to be eradicated, even by his diligent and skilful hand; and this degeneracy in the productions of literature, with a few exceptions, kept a regular pace with the depravity of manners, which prevailed during the succeeding times of the lower empire.

It may be observed of Quintilian and of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that their respective works are not merely calculated for the improvement of youth in eloquence and painting, but that they contain the principles of true taste, which are applicable to the fine arts and to literature in general, aided by great force of expression, and adorned with great elegance of fancy. The concise review of Greek and Latin authors by Quintilian, is perhaps scarcely to be paralleled for correctness of judgment^b. He

^b Quint. lib. x. de Copia Verborum.

enlarges with peculiar pleasure upon the Orations of Cicero, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer; and gives so high a character of the Comedies of Menander, as to make us deeply regret their loss. His strictures upon Seneca prove, that in the decline of literature, when the works of that author were most popular, the taste of Quintilian was neither vitiated by false refinement, nor perverted by the prejudices of his contemporaries.

“ Were we to divide the whole space from Augustus to Constantine into two equal periods of time, we could not observe without surprise the difference in their respective degeneracy and deterioration. The writers in the first division rank, it is true, far below *their* predecessors of the Augustan school: but who will compare Calphurnius and Nemesianus with Lucan and Statius? Tacitus must not be degraded by a comparison with any historian of the latter interval; and Suetonius himself rises far above the level of Spartianus, Capitolinus, and Lampridius.”

The great cause of the corruption of the Latin language, which gradually took place after the reign of Augustus, proceeded from the number of strangers, Goths, Alans, Huns, and Gauls, who resorted to Rome from the provinces of Italy, and other parts of the empire, and intermixed foreign words, and new combinations of speech, with the

^c Introduction to the Literary History, &c. p. 20.

original Latin. It is probable indeed, that as the classical language of Rome flourished for so short a period, it had never extended to the provinces of Italy, where the inhabitants of Apulia, Tuscany, Umbria, Magna Græcia, Lombardy, and Liguria, were all distinguished by their peculiar dialects. The prevalence of Greek likewise had no inconsiderable influence in shortening the continuance of pure Latin, as the Greek had long been fashionable among the polished Romans; and when the seat of empire was removed, it entirely superseded the use of Latin in the court of Constantinople.

The accurate observer of the Latin tongue may trace its progress through the successive stages which may be called its infancy, childhood, manhood, and old age. The infancy marks the time, when Saturn and Janus reigned over the most ancient inhabitants of Italy, and the Salii pronounced in honour of the gods their wild and unpolished verses. The childhood refers to the reign of the kings, and the establishment of the laws of the twelve tables. Its manhood denotes the decline of the republic, and the rise of the empire, when poetry was cultivated by Terence, Lucretius, Virgil, and Horace; eloquence by Hortensius and Cicero; biography by Cornelius Nepos, and history by Livy. Its old age characterises the time of the lower empire, when false refinement prevailed, and the language became debased and corrupted.

III. *State of the Language in modern Times.*

The extensive conquests of the Romans, their constant intercourse with other nations, and powerful influence over them, promoted the wide diffusion of their language. The general establishment of their laws, and the custom of pleading in the courts of justice in the Latin language, laid the natives of many countries under the necessity of making it a part of their education. After the fall of the empire, the Germans, as soon as they directed their attention to literature, revived it by the study of the imperial law. Nor did the authority of the Popes contribute less to preserve and disseminate it; for it was their refined policy to oppose the learning of Rome as a barrier against the encroachments of the Greek church; so that the popularity of the Latin tongue bore no inconsiderable proportion to the extent of the pontifical power. To these causes may be attributed the prevalence of Latin, as a living language, upon the continent of Europe. It is at present spoken with fluency not only in France and Italy, by those who have received a liberal education, but even by the peasants in many parts of Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

Whilst the Romans were masters of the ancient world, and even since the revival of learning, no language has had better pretensions to the title of an universal language than the Latin. So great

has been its prevalence, that it has been cultivated by every enlightened nation; and there is no branch of learning, discovery of art, or system of science, and indeed scarcely any topic of liberal discussion or inquiry, which has not been indebted to it for expression, ornament, and illustration. This has always been the vehicle of communication between men of letters, and has enabled them to carry on a correspondence with each other from the most distant places. Many celebrated authors have considered their native tongues, as either unpolished in their phraseology, or confined in their circulation; and therefore have had recourse to the language of ancient Rome. The rays of science and learning, that beam from many valuable productions have been transmitted to the world through this clear and beautiful medium. This is the language in which were composed the invaluable works of Erasmus, Grotius, Pufendorff, Newton, Boerhaave, Bacon, and Gravina.

Even in the present age, every writer who wishes his works to descend to remote posterity, must not venture to erect the monuments of his fame with the perishable materials which modern languages supply, highly refined and firmly established as they may appear. They are in a state of gradual alteration, and are subject to the caprices of fashion and novelty: but the Latin is fixed and permanent. The phraseology of Chaucer and Hollinshed, of Malherbe and Rabelais, has long been obsolete, whilst that of Cicero, Virgil, and Horace, tried

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by the test of centuries, and consecrated by the respect of mankind, flourishes in perpetual youth. The language once spoken by the conquerors of the world, is still used to express the dictates of gratitude, honour, and veneration. It is inscribed upon the public edifices, the monuments and the medals of every country in Europe; and transmits the remembrance of patriots, philosophers, heroes, and scholars, through the successive generations of mankind, in terms, which, with respect both to dignity and precision, no modern tongue can equal.

At the revival of learning, the opinion of scholars was by no means uniform, as to the proper standard of Latin composition. Longolius, Bembo, Paulus Manutius, and some other respectable writers, were advocates for the exclusive imitation of Cicero, and endeavoured to gain the classic palm, by presenting in their works a servile copy of his style. This predilection was severely censured, and the right of the other classics to equal attention was ably maintained by Henry Stephens, Politian, and Erasmus. The controversy, carried on with much warmth of temper, and ingenuity of argument on both sides, has long ceased: and a general acquaintance with all the writers of the Augustan age, has been cultivated by those who wished to acquire an elegant Latin style. Modern writers of Latin have risen to fame in proportion as they have succeeded in copying these models; but subject, however, to the defects which necessarily

rily attend the study of a foreign language, their expressions generally take a tincture from their native tongues ; and under the Roman disguise may frequently be discovered the features of the French, the German, or the English. Justice however restrains us from applying this remark with equal force to the Italians, as the derivation of their language, and their descent from a Roman origin, enable them to tread more exactly in the steps of their illustrious ancestors.

To write Latin with ease and elegance, can only be the attainment of him, who is equally a sound scholar and a man of taste. To store his memory with choice phrases, culled from the best classics, is not sufficient: for this would only make his style a kind of patch-work; he must study them, not so much for their particular words as their general manner, and he must labour with unremitting assiduity to develope the art and unravel the texture of their compositions^d. His next care must be to adapt classical Latin to his own ideas, in a manner suitable to the nature of his particular subject; and, when he adorns himself with the dress of the ancients, he must endeavour to move with grace, and express himself with ease and dignity. Thus may be acquired, by attentive observation and repeated trials, that diction which is pure, but not affected; learned but not pedantic; and classi-

^d Consult Walchius de Imitatione, c. xiv. and c. xv.

cal at the same time that it is original. These are the fair colours of style, which adorn the elegant, luminous, and flowing periods of Gravina and Lowth; and the harmonious and polished verses of Milton, Vida, and Sannazarius.

The Greek language is not perhaps so liable to be corrupted by those who are best acquainted with such subjects, and are best qualified to make an attentive and just comparison; it is said that the Greek claims the superiority over all other languages in its richness, variety of expression, there is precision without obscurity, and vigour without redundancy. It owes its beauty to the various and diversified reflections of its words, and the latter to the great number of its derivatives. In its general structure and formation, a proper regard is paid to the ear, as well as to the understanding; for its energy and strength are not more striking than its harmony. Of the intricacies of its rules does not import too much to the student of its expressions, and its grammatical system is in every part exact and complete. It is a language of its own, and not a language of the ancients. From a short view of its history and character, it will be evident that this language deserves to be held up as a perfect model of expression, and that it fully justifies the praise of those scholars who have been its admirers. See Monboddo's Origin of Languages, vol. iv. p. 25, &c.

CHAPTER V.

The Greek Language.

THE assertion will not perhaps be liable to be controverted by those, who are best acquainted with such subjects, and are best qualified to make extensive and just comparisons, if it be said that the Greek claims the superiority over all other languages. In its numerous modes of expression there is precision without obscurity, and copiousness without redundance. It owes the former to the various and diversified inflections of its words, and the latter to the great number of its derivatives. In its general structure and formation, a proper regard is paid to the ear, as well as to the understanding; for its energy and strength are not more striking than its harmony. The strictness of its rules does not impose too much restraint upon its expressions, and its grammatical system is in every part exact and complete^e.

From a short view of its *history* and *characteristics*, it will be evident, that this language deserves to be held up as a perfect model of expression, and that it fully justifies the praise of those scholars

^e See Monboddo's Origin of Languages, vol. iv. p. 25, &c.

and critics, who have celebrated its excellence in proportion as they have enjoyed its beauties, and derived taste, improvement, and pleasure from the perusal of its incomparable writers.

The East was the fruitful source of the literature, as well as of the science, and mythology of the Greeks. Letters were communicated by Cadmus and his Phœnician followers to them; and they were more indebted to the roving disposition, or the necessities of strangers, than to their own active curiosity, for this acquisition. It is probable that, before they received this valuable species of knowledge, they represented their thoughts by delineating the figures of plants and animals, as the Egyptians did in their hieroglyphics, because the Greek word *γραφειν* signifies both *to paint* and *to write*; *γραμμα* is a *picture* as well as a *letter*; and *σηματα*, or *σημεια*, mean as well the *images of natural objects*, as *artificial marks*, or *characters*.

The oral language of ancient Greece, before it rose from a state of barbarism, was simple and uncompounded. It was formed from the primitive dialects of the Hellenians and Pelasgians. So small was the original stock of Grecian eloquence, that all the words are derived from an inconsiderable number of primitives. But the acute and ingenious spirit of the people gradually displayed itself in the increase and improvement of their modes of expression, as they advanced in the cultivation

tivation of other arts, and the progressive stages of civilized life.

The names of the original characters of Phœnicia and those of Greece are similar; and the resemblance of their forms, and the ancient mode of writing from the right hand to the left, which is common to them both, furnish a decisive proof, that they had one and the same origin. In process of time they changed their arrangement in writing, and inscribed their characters in alternate order, from the left to the right, and from right to left, as was before observed, when we spoke of language in general. Some letters were afterwards added, the powers of others were altered, written vowels were introduced to supply that deficiency which was common to Greek with all the Oriental dialects; and the combinations of vowels called diphthongs were introduced, which are in a great degree peculiar to the Greek language. The divisions into dialects were gradually formed by the independent and unconnected people, whose names they bear; and as they had no common metropolis, they adapted their modes of speech to their own provincial manners and characters. The Doric, of which the Eolic was a branch, was spoken in Bœotia, the Peloponnesus, Epirus, Crete, Sicily, and all the Grecian colonies planted upon the coasts of Italy. It was characteristic of the unpolished manners of the Dorians themselves, and bore some analogy to that grandeur and simplicity of design, which are visible in the remaining

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ing specimens of their architecture. They pronounced their words very broad, and inserted their favourite A, wherever they could substitute it for another vowel^f. The most perfect examples of this dialect, which the ravages of time have spared, are the Pastorals of Theocritus, the Odes of Pindar, and the mathematical treatises of Archimedes. Although the Ionic is the prevailing dialect of Homer, he has diversified his works with the various forms of expression which the others supplied. The favourable opportunities afforded by his travels into the different parts of Greece and its colonies, furnished him with this advantage, and gave him a complete command of every kind of provincial phraseology^g. The Ionians were fond of extending their words to a greater length than the other Greeks, for they added letters, resolved syllables into their component letters, and divided diphthongs^h. Progressive improvements were communicated to their dialect, which was spoken on all the populous coasts of Asia Minor, as well as in the territories of Attica, the original settlement of the Ionians. The witty and ingenious inhabitants of Athens, advanced it to that state of refinement, elegance, and sweetness, which charm the classical reader in Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Xe-

^f They used for instance, τιμα for τιμη, μεγαθος for μεγαθος, σελανα for σεληνη, εικαλι for εικοσι, Αινεια for Αινεισ, τιμᾶν for the gen. τιμῶν, γελᾶν and ελᾶν for the particples γελῶν and ελῶν, &c.

^g Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer, p. 282, &c. and Plutarchus de Dialectis.

^h They used for instance Σαμιοισι for Σαμιοις, Αινειω for Αινεισ, μυσων for μυσων, ἡμεες for ἡμεις, λογοιο for λογε, ὠυλος for αὐλος, θανμασας for θανμασας, &c.

nophon, Plato, Aristotle, and Demosthenes. They changed letters of a harsh and unpleasing sound for those which were softer, and they were remarkable for contracting their words in order to adapt them to the short measures of their dramatic poetry.

The Athenians were celebrated for the greatest delicacy of taste. Even the inferior classes of citizens decided not only upon the sentiments delivered by the public speakers, but criticised the purity of their language, and the harmony of their periods. So exquisite was their judgment, as oftentimes to border upon fastidiousness; and the least deviation from the established rules of propriety offended their ears. As a remarkable instance of their refinement, we are told that Theophrastus, the author of the *Characters*, a native of Lesbos, and a disciple of Plato, who gave him his name for the fluency and elegance of his diction, was discovered by one of the common people of Athens to be a stranger, by his too great accuracy of pronunciationⁱ.

The theory of derivation adopted by Lord Monboddo, the author of "the Origin and Progress of Language," according to which all the words of the Greek language are derived from duads of vowels, originated with Hemsterhusius, one of the most eminent scholars of his age. Not only the vowels regu-

ⁱ Illa Attica anus Theophrastum hominem alioqui disertissimum, annotata unius affectatione verbi hospitem dixit: nec alio se id deprehendisse, interrogata respondit, quam quod *nimum* Atticè loqueretur. Quint. lib. 8. c. 1.

larly taken from A to T, and ending in Ω, as αω, εω, ιω, υω, are made the basis of this plan; but the most ancient consonants are either prefixed to them, or inserted between them, so as to form about a hundred radical verbs. With these, other consonants and vowels were mixed, and variously combined; and thus the whole language is supposed to have been gradually constructed and furnished with its abundant stores of derivative words^k.

We do not hesitate to acknowledge, that this theory is very ingenious, and deserves the examination of those, who wish to investigate the origin of languages. The Greek, no doubt, is distinguished by very strong marks of a methodical structure. But ought it not to be considered, whether language, like the government of nations, does not arise out of peculiar circumstances and situations? Is it not probable that necessity, the invention of arts, and the exercise of various occupations, are its genuine sources? After a people have emerged from a savage state, in which all their attention has been employed in procuring the means of subsistence, and they have made some considerable advances in refinement, they have then leisure to fix the proper standard of their language, to reduce all its parts to order, and complete its artificial form. For its origin, therefore, it can be little indebted to the systematic precision of rules, whatever it may owe to them for its improvement. The ages of

^k Origin and Progress of Language, vol. ii. p. 540. vol. iv. p. 54. Lennep's Proleg. in Etymologicon, p. 27. and vol. ii.

barbarism may produce warriors and legislators ; but it required a less turbulent and more refined state of society, for grammarians and philologists to arise, and for works of literature to be composed, and regulated by their laws.

I. *The Characteristics of the Greek Language.*

Among its numerous beauties, it is deservedly celebrated for sweetness, as well as variety of sounds, to which our pronunciation is far from doing justice, from a want of the same compass, and modulation of tones. By transposing, altering, and taking away letters, the Greek was softened, and made more pleasing to the ear. The diphthongs, as well as the open vowels, swell and elevate the tones, in a manner superior to modern languages. The declensions of nouns, the conjugations of verbs, the changes of dialects, and the number of poetical licences, produce the greatest variety of terminations. Many words are closed with vowels, and very few with mute consonants, as is the case in the Oriental and other languages.

In the works of Homer in particular, the beauty of single words, considered only with respect to sound, is remarkable. With consummate skill and taste, he has made choice of such as are rough or smooth, long or short, harmonious or discordant to the ear, so as to agree exactly with the nature of
his

his different subjects. The names of persons, rivers, mountains, and countries, are sometimes soft, and sometimes sonorous, and contribute in no small degree to improve the charms of his descriptions. Homer's Catalogue of the Ships will illustrate this remark: and if taken in a geographical point of view, it may be considered as an accurate map of ancient Greece highly coloured, and finished by a masterly hand¹.

The works of the best Greek authors are much to be admired for the skilful arrangement of words, and the beauties of finished composition. From the accurate distinctions made by genders and cases in nouns, and by persons in verbs, no invariable situation of words was necessary; and consequently such as were declinable could be placed in any part of a sentence without injury to its sense and with great advantage to its rhythm. Greek compositions abound with grand and lofty sentences, consisting of members of various extent, terminating sometimes with one part of speech, and sometimes with another. Hence the ear is constantly gratified by a variety of pauses, and an harmonious flow of periods; and an emphatical word, like the principal figure in a picture, is placed where it will produce the most striking effect. In poetry this arrangement is still more remarkable, as it is accommodated to every different kind of metre. All these modifications of style were intro-

¹ Iliad, lib. ii. l. 494, &c.

duced with consummate skill by Homer, and Pindar, Plato, and Demosthenes. Unable as the moderns are to equal these beauties, or even to form a complete idea of their nature; yet the judgment and extensive knowledge possessed by the ancient critics, who lived some ages after the most flourishing era of Grecian literature, amply qualified them for this purpose. Both Dionysius the Halicarnassian and Demetrius Phalereus enter into particular and critical discussions on the melodious construction of Greek sentences, in prose as well as verse, conduct their observations upon regular principles of rhythm and metre, and illustrate them by the examples of the most eminent authors.

Other characteristic properties of the Greek language will appear by considering the particles, which connect sentences and members of sentences with each other. They are, indeed, too often regarded by superficial readers as redundant, or unmeaning; but when closely examined, they are found to possess particular force, energy, and precision^m. The diminutive words give great exactness and beauty to expression, and are calculated to annex to an object some pleasing idea of tenderness

^m Τοῖς παραπληρωματικοῖς συνδέσμοις χρῆσθαι οὐχ' ὡς προσθηκαὶς κεναῖς—καθὰπερ παρὰ Πλάτωνι “Ο μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν ἑρῶνι Ζεὺς.” Καὶ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ. “Ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ” &c. Λαμβάνεται δὲ καὶ ἐν παθητικοῖς πολλακίς ὁ συνδεσμός ἕτος· ὥσπερ—“ἔτω δὲ οἰκονδε”—Εἰ γὰρ τὸν συνδεσμὸν ἐξέλῃς, συνεξαίρησεις καὶ τὸ παθος.—Demetrius Phalereus περὶ Ἑρμηνείας. See Clarke's Homer's Iliad A. l. 56. B. l. 158. E. 858, &c.

or familiarity. The dual number accurately distinguishes two persons from one, as well as from an indiscriminate and vague multitude. Different inflections of the same cases of nouns are adapted to all the uses of poetry and prose. The power of the double negative is very sensibly felt; and there are instances, where prohibition or contradiction is guarded even by three negatives, which enforce the sentiment in the greatest degree. In Greek and in Greek alone occur the grammatical solecisms of a verb singular being joined to a neuter plural, and of the union of an article, or adjective masculine with a substantive feminine. The middle voice has the peculiar power of expressing, that a person is the subject of his own actions. The tenses are more numerous and more definite than those of any other language. In Greek are to be found a past imperative mood, a participle present of the passive voice, and a paulo-post future tense. Conditional action is denoted by the subjunctive, and such as relates to an object of desire, by the optative mood. The variety and exactness of ideas displayed in all the modifications of the verb show a refinement of thought, and a depth of metaphysical reasoning, applied to the divisions of time, which prove the acuteness and philosophical precision of the Greeksⁿ.

ⁿ Artium parens et altrix Græca diligentia est:

Literarum porro curam nulla gens attentius

Repperit: polivit usque finem ad unguis extimum.

Terentianus Maurus.

The freedom of expression which the Greek Poets allowed themselves to use is a peculiarity which cannot escape our attention. They made syllables long or short, added them to the beginning, middle, or end of some words, cut them off from the beginning, middle, or end of others, and transposed letters as they pleased. Examples of all these licences may easily be found, and particularly in Homer, who has availed himself of this privilege to the fullest extent.

The prolific power of their language was not limited by any fixed bounds, or restrained by any certain rules. Verbs were the fruitful trees, which produced innumerable branches springing from each other in the greatest abundance and variety. Verbs are sometimes compounded with each other, and sometimes with substantives; nouns are formed from them, and even from different tenses and persons of the same verb*. But the power of compounding them with prepositions was of a much greater extent. With any one of the eighteen prepositions, any verb, unless its signifi-

* See Clarke's ingenious system of the Greek tenses, in his note on line 37 of the first book of the Iliad.

From *πεποιημαι*, *ησαι*, *ηται*, are derived *ποιημα*, *ποιησις*, *ποιητης*. See Monboddo, v. ii. p. 185.

There are thirty-four instances at least of the verb being compounded with double prepositions, *αντεμβαλλω*, *αντιπαρκαλλω*, *αντιπροκαλλω*, &c. Instances of a verb and three prepositions, such as *υπερεκπρορειν*, are not uncommon in Homer. See Lord Monboddo, and Valkenaer apud Lennep, p. 24, 25.

tion made it naturally repugnant to such an alliance, could be joined. There are numerous instances of such combinations, and likewise of double and even treble prepositions being united with verbs and nouns. As such compound words possess strength, richness, and significant brevity, they show the productive powers of a language, which contains inexhaustible resources. Their effect is more particularly felt in poetry, which they supply with one of its most striking and beautiful ornaments. To the genius of Homer they furnished appropriate expression, and enabled him to give, even to an epithet, such distinct and picturesque ideas, as poets in many other languages convey with less effect in long descriptions. To extensive power of compounding words few resemblances can be traced more apposite than the indefinite combination of letters to form words, and the multiplication of numbers in arithmetic.

From such powers of language naturally arose a proportionable copiousness. Even as early as the time of Homer, that is five centuries before the refined age of Plato and Xenophon, it had assumed a permanent character: and his works, produced in the infancy of arts and civilization, afforded a satisfactory proof, to what various subjects it could be applied. So full and complete indeed is the nature of his style, so far is it from affording any ground for complaints of its weakness and deficiency, that all scholars unite in their admiration

of its energy and copiousness. What are the thoughts of Virgil, Tasso, or any modern poet, to which the diction of Homer, and the other great Grecian poets, could not give adequate expression, and even embellish with additional and superior beauties of harmony, richness, and variety of composition?

II. *The Style of Greek Writers.*

Thus to the fertile and happy invention of writers of all descriptions did the Greek language supply an abundant store of the most significant terms; and every conception of the mind, every appearance of nature, and production of art, were conveyed by correspondent and adequate words. The historian, the orator, and the philosopher, exercised the same freedom, energy, and beauty of expression, as the poet himself. The effect of their genius upon language was like that of the sun, when it varies the glowing tints of light, and touches the clouds with the richest and most beautiful diversity of colours.

The Greek language assumed with ease the various forms in which Eloquence exerted her powers to persuade and Philosophy to instruct mankind. Plato was diffuse and poetical; Xenophon was simple and elegant; Aristotle was concise and vigorous. The comedies of Aristophanes and Menander, however unlike in their characters and sentiments,

sentiments, were both improved by the pure and refined beauties of their native dialect. Theocritus gave the artless graces of Doric simplicity to his pastorals; and Sappho conveyed her tender sentiments of passion in the pleasing cadences of that kind of versification, which is emphatically distinguished by her name. The Alcaic Ode, the Elegy, and the Epigram are all marked by their own peculiar characters. The easy flow of Iambics, and the irregular combination of choral measures, adorned the dramatic productions of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Their language was a perfect image of the bold and versatile genius of the people who spoke it; for it embraced the wide extent of human perceptions, was moulded into every form, and produced astonishment by its force, captivated attention by its beauty, and enraptured the ear by its varied and delightful melody.

While the Greeks conveyed the dictates of philosophy to the understanding, held up the most pleasing pictures to the imagination, or by the impulse of passion melted and subdued the heart, the dress, in which they clothed their ideas, was at once rich, elegant, and graceful; and while they rose to an elevation of genius, courage, and taste, which has never been equalled, their words were the most harmonious, nervous, and expressive, that ever flowed from mortal lips.

From considering the excellence of this extraordinary language, we may indeed be disposed to excuse, or more properly speaking to applaud, the exalted style of praise, in which its powers were celebrated, by those who were the most competent judges of its merits. The accents which flowed from the lips of the venerable Nestor were described by Homer as exceeding the sweetness of honey. It is an observation of the great Roman orator, that if Jupiter had communicated his will to mankind, he would have adopted the language of Plato. When Pericles addressed the Athenian assemblies, he did not, in the opinion of his contemporaries, merely convince his hearers by his persuasive arguments; but, to use the exalted language of his countrymen, majestic in voice and aspect, and irresistible in force, as if he commanded the elements of heaven, he overpowered the faculties of his astonished hearers with the thunder and lightning of his eloquence.

III. *Duration and Extent of the Language.*

In addition to the curious circumstances, which distinguish the Greek language, it may be remarked, that it was spoken and written with purity and elegance for a greater portion of time, than any other ever known in the world. The long period of twenty-three centuries will scarcely measure its continuance. We have seen, that as early

as

as the time of Homer its standard was fixed, and it continued to be cultivated till Constantinople was taken by the Turks, in the fifteenth century. A short time before that event, although it existed in a degenerate state among the common people, it was spoken with such correctness and elegance by persons of a liberal education, and particularly by the ladies of rank and high condition, as to give no very imperfect specimen of the style of Aristophanes, Euripides, and the philosophers and historians, who flourished in the purest times. Such is the very curious fact related by the learned Philelphus, who visited the metropolis of the eastern empire twelve years only before it was taken by the Turks. The intermediate corruptions can be detected only by scholars of more than ordinary acuteness and observation. By such alone can the different colours and shades of diction be distinguished in the works of writers, who lived at times so remote from Xenophon and Plato, as Procopius, who, in the reign of the Emperor Justinian, wrote the History of the Wars between the Romans and the barbarous nations; Eustathius, the learned Commentator on Homer, and Anna Comnena, the daughter of the Greek Emperor Alexis, who wrote the life of her father in the 12th, and Chalcondylas, a native of Athens, who wrote the History of the Turks in the 15th century. The same remark may be applied to other works included in the voluminous collection of the Byzantine historians.

The difference between pure Greek and that
N 3 which

which was spoken and written by foreigners was much more strongly marked. The writers of the New Testament fall much below the classical standard. Hebrew idioms, and words used in new senses, abound in their writings; and their style, which by modern scholars is called *Hellenistic*, to distinguish it from pure Greek, will not bear the test of rigid criticism. Yet it is far from being of the same uniform character, since we find that St. Luke wrote with more purity of expression, St. John with more simplicity and plainness, and St. Paul with greater copiousness and variety, than the other sacred writers. They approached nearer to pure Greek in proportion as they possessed the advantages of education, and were improved by intercourse with the higher ranks of society.

As this continued long to be a living language, so was its circulation very extensive. Under the successors of Alexander it was carried far beyond the limits of the Greek provinces, and long before the Christian era it was spoken by Jews, Romans, and Africans. It was cultivated by the learned in Egypt and Syria, as well as in Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Carthage. Josephus and Philo Judæus preferred it to their native language: and the writers of the New Testament adopted it as the best means to facilitate the propagation of Christianity. Of its general prevalence, Cicero speaks in explicit terms in his Oration for Archias the poet; where he informs us, that, at a period when Latin was confined to very few districts; the Greek
authors

authors were studied, and their language was spoken in most parts of the world. With respect therefore to its wide diffusion, the ancient Greek may be compared to modern French, but whatever degree of delicacy the French may possess in common with the Greek, it wants many of its most distinguishing characteristics, and in particular its grace and harmony, its precision and copiousness, its vigour and sublimity.

There were many causes for the great extent of the Greek language. Numerous colonies planted in different parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; the commerce of the Greek merchants; the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the permanent establishments, which he made, by building many large cities, contributed to this end. But the cause, which produced this diffusion more than all others, was the intrinsic excellence of the language itself. It is a remarkable fact, that at the period when the provinces of Greece were reduced to the meanest vassalage, and the character of the people was sunk to the lowest state of disgrace in the opinion of the Romans their conquerors, their language still continued to retain its high and original reputation, and was studied not only by the Romans, but by persons of respectability and distinction in all parts of the ancient world. The pure Greek, as a living language, finally sunk with the power of the eastern empire under the triumphant arms of the Turks. A. D. 1453.

IV. *Modern Greek.*

Every scholar must naturally be desirous to ascertain the present state of the Greek language. Its deviation from that which was formerly spoken, both with respect to pronunciation and grammar, is very considerable. The words of the language indeed, like Italian and Latin, are in substance the same as those of antient Greek; there is, however, an intermixture of Turkish with that which is spoken in Asia; of Arabic with that which prevails on the coasts of Africa; and of Italian with that which is used at Benevento, and other parts of Italy. In their conjugations they imitate the practice of the moderns, by making use of auxiliary verbs. In their pronunciation they attend to accent, and hence the quantity of words is not only disregarded, but often most grossly violated; and they have intirely lost that sweet modulation and variety of sound, which graced the lips of their ancestors^p. Such is their neglect of ancient literature, that the New Testament, as well as the works of their own classics, have been translated for their use. The decline of their language has kept pace with the degeneracy of their manners. These descendants of

^p Mouboddo. Foster on Accent and Quantity, p. 207. For an elegant sketch of the political and literary state of Greece during her good and bad fortune, see Harris's Philol. Inquiries, c. iii.

Pericles and Demosthenes, oppressed by the despotic government of the Turks, and immersed in superstition, are ignorant of the pure phraseology of their illustrious ancestors; and it is a remarkable fact, that of the seventy different jargons, which are now spoken in Greece, that of the Athenians is held to be the most corrupt and barbarous^a. The mixture of their language with the dialect of barbarians, may remind us of the magnificent fragments of marble temples, remarkable for exquisite architecture, which are seen in the streets of Athens to support the rude cottages and mean sheds of the Grecian slaves.

From the whole of this survey of the *English*, *Latin*, and *Greek* languages, we may form a judgment of the origin, progress, characteristics, and beauties of each; and we may be enabled to determine their respective merits. When we allow to the Greek all its due praise for harmony, copiousness, and that amazing ductility, by which it could express with ease, in derivative and compound words, new indeed, but perfectly analogical, every discovery in science, or invention in the arts; when we commend the Latin for its majesty, precision, and vigour;—and when we hold up the classical writers in both as the best examples of learning and taste, let us not neglect to form a proper estimate of *our own* language. Deriving its stock of words from so many different sources,

^a De Pauw, v. i. p. 70.

and very imperfectly understood without the aid of Greek and Latin, it is energetic, copious, and flexible. It is remarkably simple in its construction, and has sufficient sweetness and melody for poetical diction. And, perhaps, if we were confined to the knowledge of one modern language to the exclusion of all others, no one could be found more excellent, or more deserving the praise, which we have, it is presumed on a due consideration of its comparative merits, assigned to it¹.

¹ See p. 132 of this volume.

CHAPTER VI.

Eloquence.

“**NOTHING** seems to me more excellent, than to be able to engage the affections, convince the understandings, and guide the inclinations of mankind, and even to divert those inclinations from their original course into a new channel, by the commanding powers of eloquence. This noble faculty has in every free state, more particularly in times of peace and tranquillity, been held in the highest esteem, and obtained the greatest influence. And indeed what can be a juster subject of admiration, than that amidst a multitude of persons one man only, or very few, should rise superior to all others in the exercise of that power, which nature has equally bestowed upon all the human race? Or what is so pleasing to the ear, or so gratifying to the understanding, as a judicious and solid discourse delivered in elegant and polished language? Or what is so efficacious, or so noble, as to influence the senate, the judges, and the people, by the charms of oratory? What is so great, so generous, or divine, as to rescue the virtuous from oppression, and protect the unfortunate from injustice? Can any thing be more useful than to be always furnished with the arms which

which eloquence supplies, to assert your rights, and to repel the attacks of injury? And not to confine our observations to the courts of justice, or the senate-house, what is there in the midst of retirement from business more agreeable and entertaining; what better proof can be given of the refinements of a liberal education, than a flow of elegant and polished conversation? It is indeed the peculiar characteristic of our nature, which distinguishes us from the brute creation, that we can express our thoughts by language, and both enjoy and communicate the pleasures of social intercourse. Who therefore does not hold such an endowment in great estimation? and who does not think it an object of honourable ambition to surpass others in the exercise of that faculty, in which rational beings shew their ascendancy over inferior animals? But not to dwell upon inconsiderable points, let us proceed to the most material.—What other power than that of eloquence could have proved sufficient to induce the scattered individuals of mankind to quit a rude and savage life, in order to form regular communities? and what other power could have softened them by the refinements of civilized manners; or after states were founded, what other power could have restrained them by salutary institutions, and secured their prosperity and happiness by forms of government, and establishments of law? To close this subject, which is indeed almost inexhaustible, I lay it down as an indisputable principle, that upon the talents and the discretion of an accomplished speaker, not only his own personal respectability,

respectability, but the welfare of numerous individuals, nay even the safety of the government may depend. I therefore earnestly exhort you, my young friends, to cultivate with incessant diligence the study of eloquence, for the sake of your own reputation, the advantage of your friends, and the prosperity and glory of your country.”

In this translation the reader sees an imperfect representation of the animated encomium, which Cicero, in the beginning of his *Dialogue de Oratore*, pronounced upon his favourite art. And to teach the best use of the faculty of speaking, and point out the method by which it can be made to answer the most important purposes, is the great end of the art of Rhetoric. It is evident that no study more fully repays the labour bestowed upon its cultivation, if we reflect upon the rise and progress of eloquence in the early ages of the world, and the great improvements which have been made in it both in ancient and modern times. We may recollect the extraordinary degree of perfection to

* Cicero de Oratore, lib. i. sect. 30. Edit. Proust. And he has comprized the advantages of eloquence in another passage too beautiful to be omitted.—“Jam vero domina rerum eloquendi vis, quam est præclara, quamque divina! quæ primum effecit, ut ea quæ ignoramus, discere, & ea quæ scimus, alios docere possimus. Deinde hæc cohortamur, hæc persuademus, hæc consolamur afflictos, hæc deducimus perterritos a timore, hæc gestientes comprimimus, hæc cupiditates, iracundiasque restringimus; hæc nos juris, legum, urbium societate devinxit, hæc a vita immani & fera segregavit.” De Natura Deorum, lib. 2.

which

which it was carried by Demosthenes and Cicero; and their productions which have come down to us give the most satisfactory proofs that they were consummate masters of their art, and that they excelled in it, not less by the extent and variety of their knowledge, than the brilliancy of their genius. In our own times, we see the effects produced by rude and unpolished eloquence upon the minds of the common people in the harangues of crafty demagogues, and the sermons of itinerant enthusiasts: it is evident, therefore, what a powerful instrument of persuasion it may be, when placed in the hands of well-educated persons, who to all the advantages of abilities, voice, and action, which ignorant speakers may possess, unite the guidance of rules, and an acquaintance with the best examples^t.

Nor will a knowledge of the principles of Rhetoric, upon which the chief beauties of composition depend for their grace and effect, be of inconsiderable use to the *hearer* or *reader*, as well as the *speaker*. It will enable them to understand the principles of composition in general, whether in verse or prose, and to form a right judgment of its merits.

If objections be ever raised against eloquence, considered as a faculty, which may be made the in-

^t For the principal topics of this chapter, I am indebted to that rich storehouse of knowledge, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article *Oratory*; and likewise to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Cicero's *de Oratore*, *de Inventione*; and Quintilian.

strument of evil as well as of good, it is obvious that similar objections may be urged against the exercise of the faculty of reason, as it is too often employed to lead men into error. But no one would think of bringing a serious argument from this abuse of the intellectual powers against the improvement of our understandings^u. Reason, eloquence, and every art most essential to the comfort of life, are liable to be misapplied, and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it would argue an excess of levity to contend, that upon this account they ought to be neglected. While the orator employs his talents, and practices the rules of his profession, in the pursuit of that end for which it was originally designed,—the persuading men to good and virtuous actions, and the dissuading them from every measure that is dishonourable and vicious; nothing can be more excellent in itself, or more useful to society.

Eloquence is the art of speaking and writing with elegance and dignity, in order to please, instruct, and persuade. Elegance consists in the purity and perspicuity of language. *Purity* may be acquired by studying the most excellent authors, conversing with the best company, and the frequent practice of composition. *Perspicuity* consists in making use of clear and intelligible expressions, in avoiding ambiguous words, affected brevity, long and perplexed periods,

^u See Quintilian's admirable chapter, *An utilis sit Rhetorice*, lib. ii. c. 17.

and confused metaphors. If a composition be perspicuous, the sense of it will strike the mind, in the same manner as the light of the sun does the eyes, even if you do not look attentively at the sun itself^w. *Dignity* arises from sublime thoughts, and noble and elevated tropes and figures.

It may be thought unreasonable to fetter the mind by systems, and restrain the flights of eloquence by rules. But it is evident from experience and observation, that rules may greatly assist genius, provided they point out the right road, without confining the learner to a single track, from which he is told it is unlawful to deviate. They are undoubtedly necessary before practice gives that ease, which may enable him to trust to his own well-regulated exertions, and to proceed without a guide.

To enumerate the various rules of Rhetoric would require too minute a detail; and they will be best learnt from those writers, who both in ancient and modern times have obtained great reputation by their works upon the subject. Such are Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and their faithful followers, Blair, Campbell, and Fenelon. To ascertain the leading principles relating to eloquence in general, it may be sufficient to consider the subject under four distinct heads.

^w Quint. lib. viii.

- I. The sources of argument.
- II. The different kinds of style.
- III. The ornaments of a composition.
- IV. The arrangement of the different parts of a composition.
- V. Propriety of delivery and action.

I. *The Sources of Argument.*

The basis of all eloquence is *invention*. This faculty, strictly speaking, relates to discovery rather than creation, and must be understood to signify new associations of those ideas which had been previously stored in the mind. It is this which enables the speaker to form such topics as are necessary for the statement, explanation, and illustration of his subject, with a view to conciliate the minds of his hearers, and engage them in his favour. A liveliness of imagination, and a quickness of thought, are great assistants to invention; and they who possess these gifts of nature are found to be rarely at a loss for reasons to defend truth and detect error. Of this prime faculty the most eminent orators and poets were in full possession; and we find that so far from giving us any cause to complain of barrenness of invention, they display the abundant produce of intellectual fertility. This remark is particularly justified, among other instances, by the examples of Homer, Plato, and Cicero.

Accurate learning and extensive knowledge, the prospects

prospects of nature, the discoveries of art—the aids of education—and the results of experience and observation upon mankind, are the proper funds to supply this faculty with its requisite stores. Hence are furnished the various topics, whether *external* or *internal*, which are applicable to the different kinds of causes, whether *demonstrative*, *deliberative*, or *judicial*, and which are treated of at large by the Rhetoricians, and particularly by Aristotle and Cicero. The judgment must ever be active in the right application of the assistance, which genius and extensive knowledge can bring to every particular subject; whatever is trifling or superfluous must be rejected; and nothing admitted into a composition that is not fully to the purpose, and calculated to answer the end originally proposed.

II. *The different kinds of Style.*

Style is the manner in which a person expresses himself by means of words, and it is characteristic of his thoughts. It is the description or picture of his mind. As eloquence derives its chief excellence, beauty, and splendour from style; it is of the greatest importance to the orator to be well acquainted with its various kinds.

Every country possesses, not only a peculiar language, but a peculiar style, suited to the temper and genius of its inhabitants. The Eastern nations are remarkable for diction, which is full and

and sonorous, strong and forcible, and animated by bold and expressive figures. On the contrary, the Northern languages are deficient in these respects, and generally partake of the cold influence of their climate. In the former the warmth of imagination predominates; in the latter there is more of the strictness and correctness of judgment.

The principal distinctions of style arise from the diversity of subjects. The same mode of expression would be as inconsistent upon different occasions, as the same dress for persons of different ranks, or for different seasons of the year. Propriety, therefore, requires expression to be adapted to the nature of the subject. Style is sometimes divided into three kinds, the *low* or *plain*; the *middle* or *temperate*; and the *lofty* or *sublime*. As, however, these three divisions may be found, upon examination, to be too theoretical, it may be better to adopt a more striking and more marked distinction, by separating style into the *plain* and the *grand*.

A plain style is that of which the words are direct and strictly proper; it sinks not to those which are vulgar, nor does it rise to those which are lofty. As it is employed to describe things correctly and clearly, its proper subjects are letters, essays, narratives, works of science and philosophy, or any other topics that require little or no ornament, or addresses to the passions. Simplicity and ease are its peculiar beauties; and the choicest examples of it are to be found

found in the works of Xenophon and Cæsar, and the sermons of Secker and Wilson.

————— They are
Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,
Beyond the pomp of drefs————— *
In the former climate.

The *grand* style belongs to those subjects which admit all the splendour, force, and dignity of composition. It is the soil which is favourable to the growth of the fairest flowers of eloquence. Here the most select words, flowing periods, and bright and animated tropes and figures, find their proper place. The dialogues of Plato, the speeches of Livy, and the most admired orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, afford the best examples.

As it is a matter of importance that the style should be adapted to the subject, this care is in no respect more indispensable than in the sublime and the pathetic.

The *Sublime* includes the grandest thoughts which the mind is capable of forming. Such thoughts relate either to divine subjects, to the works of nature, or such expressions, or actions, as are esteemed the noblest and the best. The sublime shines by its own native light, and far from soliciting, rejects the assistance of ornament; for when the mind is

* Thomson's Seasons.

elevated

elevated to the utmost extent of its powers by a noble idea, it attends not to the niceties of language; but, from its own vigorous and lively conception of things, expresses them in terms the most emphatic, and best adapted to their nature. Dignity and majesty are the proper qualities of this species of style, both as to the thought and expression; as may be best illustrated by numerous passages in the holy Scriptures, the Iliad of Homer, and the Paradise Lost of Milton.

The sublime often relates to subjects which the mind cannot fully comprehend, and therefore derives part of its effect from obscurity. Thus in surveying the prospects of nature, we are more struck with a view of such mountains as Snowden, or Benlomond, when their summits are enveloped in clouds, than when they are completely visible. A cataract partly concealed by trees, and which is more heard than seen, produces the same effect. Lightning and Thunder increase their terroure from happening when the sky is black with clouds, or during the night.

No passages are more sublime than some in scripture, which combine the terrific with the obscure. Such is the description given in the Psalms, of the manifestation of the Almighty. *There went a smoke out in his presence; and a consuming fire out of his mouth, so that coals were kindled at it. He bowed the heavens also and came down: and it was dark under his feet. He rode upon the cherubims, and did fly: he came flying upon the wings*

of the wind. He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him with dark water, and thick clouds to cover him. And again,—The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water, the air thundred; and thine arrows went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was heard round about; the lightning shone upon the ground; the earth was moved and shook withal. Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

The noblest example is recorded by Moses in the Book of Genesis, when he describes the Almighty commencing his work of Creation. *And God said let there be light—and there was light.* Every other instance, whether antient or modern, whether taken from an historian, orator, poet, or philosopher, sinks infinitely below this. So that with good reason did Longinus, who had all the works of antiquity before him, pronounce his high approbation of this passage^y.

With the sublime is properly classed the *pathetic* of composition, wherein the greatest power is exerted over the passions. Here we are interested, agitated, and carried along with the Speaker or Writer, wherever he chooses to lead us; our passions are made to rise in unison with his; we love, detest, admire, resent, as he inspires us; and are

^y De Sublim. Sect. ix.

prompted to feel with fervour, and to act with energy, in obedience to the particular impulse, which he gives to our minds. Quintilian with great propriety calls this power of moving the passions, the soul and spirit of his art: as the proper use of the passions is not to blind or to counteract the exercise of reason, but to move in conformity to it; if an improper impulse be sometimes given to them, it is not the fault of the art, but of the artist. The pulpit admits this species of eloquence, as is clear from the Sermons of Massillon and Bourdaloue: but the fictitious scenes of Tragedy open the most extensive field for its display.

The diction of an orator may include various kinds of style. As he speaks sometimes to prove and instruct, sometimes to entertain and delight, and sometimes to rouse, animate, and astonish, he must be occasionally plain, manly, figurative, pathetic, or sublime. All this variety, however, is rarely necessary upon the same occasion. Due regard must be paid to the nature of the subject, the dispositions of the audience, the time, the place, and all other circumstances.

III. *The Ornaments of a Composition.*

The most antient languages, such as the Hebrew and the Arabic, are highly figurative; and so are those which are spoken by the wild tribes of Indians and Americans. "We have planted the tree of peace," said an American orator, "and we

have buried the axe under its roots ; we will henceforth repose under its shade ; and we will join to brighten the chain which binds our nations together." Such figurative expressions as these, which in an unimproved state of language arise from necessity, were, in process of time, used in more polished societies, for the sake of decoration, like garments originally used for protection against inclement weather, were afterwards worn for the sake of ornament. The imagination and the passions have an extensive influence over every language ; the thoughts and emotions they suggest are expressed by words taken from sensible objects, and the names of these objects were the words first introduced into all languages, and by degrees applied to other thoughts more abstract and obscure, to which it was difficult to assign distinct and proper words.

The ornaments of composition are divided into tropes and figures. A *trope*, in Latin *tropus*, from *τρεπω*, *verto*, is an expression transferred or *turned* from its proper subject to another, for the sake of ornament. A *figure*, *figura*, or as the Greeks call it, *σχημα*, is a position of words different from their common arrangement, to express more strongly some emotion of the mind. The principal tropes are Metaphor, Simile, Allegory, Hyperbole, Irony, Synecdoche, and Metonymia. The principal figures are Interrogation, Protopoeia, Apostrophe, Antithesis, and Climax^z.

^z See Quintilian de Figuris, Lib. ix. c. 1. &c. for a complete account and exemplification of all tropes and figures.

Of these tropes and figures, examples will be drawn from the Bible; and for this reason. It is too commonly regarded as a book which contains only lessons of morality and plain statements of facts; an opinion too degrading, as it is replete with beautiful images, and every ornament of style.

TROPES.

The most common and the most beautiful of tropes is the *Metaphor*. It combines one idea with another, which resembles it in some particular, for the sake of making a more lively and forcible impression upon the mind. Thus the Psalmist says, *God is my rock and my shield. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

Metaphors are so common, that in conversation we often use them, without being sensible of their occurrence. We say that a man has a *sour* or a *sweet* temper, a *cold* or a *warm* heart; that he is *enflamed* with love, *worn out* with fatigue, or *weighed down* by care. We say the air is *keen* or *soft*, and we cannot easily find words more expressive to convey these ideas.

A *Simile* differs from a metaphor, in this respect: the latter is joined with the subject it is introduced to illustrate; the former is separately expressed with some term to prepare us for the comparison of the two ideas; as when Job says, *My days are passed away as the swift ships, as the eagle that hasteth to her prey.*

An

An *Allegory* consists in a succession of metaphors, and is introduced to enliven a subject with allusive images, as for example. *The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing ; he shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort : yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me.*

Fables and *Parables* come under the head of Allegories. In fables, words and actions are attributed to beasts, and even inanimate objects, for the sake of conveying instruction. The most ancient is the fable of the Bramble and the Trees, related by Jotham to the inhabitants of Shechem, and recorded in the book of Judges. Parables are short narratives, intended to convey, by a striking description, some moral lessons. The most beautiful are the parables spoken by our Saviour, of the Sower, the Prodigal Son, and the good Samaritan.

An *Hyperbole* is a trope carried to a greater degree of excess than a metaphor, and is designed to convey an exaggerated idea of an object. It is applied to subjects the nature of which exceeds common bounds. As for example:—*Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided ; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.*

The *Irony* conveys a meaning opposite to the expression, and is shown either in the manner of the speaker, or the nature of the subject. The far-
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casin differs from the irony in being more severe, and keen in its application. *Cry aloud*, said the Prophet Elijah to the false Prophets of Baal, when they were invoking that idol to send fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice; *cry aloud for he is a God, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

The *Synecdoche* varies a common expression by putting a part for the whole, the singular number for the plural, a species for a genus, or the reverse of any of these. In common conversation we say, *so many head of cattle; twenty sail of the line; he lives at the next door.* The Prophet Isaiah says, *then shall the Assyrian fall by the sword.*

The *Metonymia* puts the cause for the effect, the author for his work, the sign for the thing signified, the thing containing for that which it contains. As in these examples: *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah. The whole city came out to meet us.*

FIGURES.

The *Interrogation* sometimes proposes questions, not so much for the sake of information as to give greater spirit to ideas: for example, our Saviour said to the multitudes concerning John the Baptist, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out*

out to see? *A man clothed with soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses: But what went ye out to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.* These fine ideas would lose all their effect, if they were expressed only by a plain assertion.

The *Prosopopoeia* gives life, passion, and action to inanimate beings, as for instance, *The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee and were afraid. What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest, and thou Jordan that thou was driven back? Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like young sheep?*

The *Apostrophe* turns off from the regular track of the subject, to address some person or thing, as *Death is swallowed up in victory. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?* Here is likewise an example of the Interrogation.

The *Antithesis* illustrates a subject by the opposition of contrary qualities. It may be compared to the light and shade of a picture, which add to the effect of each other, and make the whole composition more impressive. For example: *by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live, as sorrowful yet alway rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things."*

The *Climax* rises by regular steps from one circumstance to another until the thoughts cannot be carried to a greater elevation. Of this figure an instance is given by St. Paul, when he says—*Whom God did foreknow, them he also called; whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Whether these ornaments of composition occur in rude or refined languages, they arise, for the most part, from one source, which is the association of similar ideas. The mind unites those ideas which are most striking, and makes one appear to the fullest advantage by joining it with another. Of their beauty every one must be convinced who has any relish for the Scriptures and the Classics. And their use is no less evident; for they raise language above the level of common expression, they fix attention, and excite admiration: to them Poetry and Eloquence are not only indebted for their ornaments, but for their very essence. They enable us, as Aristotle says, to see one thing through another, and they increase the pleasures of the imagination by presenting those images, which, if they be clear, just, and natural, will not only strike us by their novelty, but produce the same pleasure the more frequently they are considered. They are most agreeable when, like the flowers which spring spontaneously from a genial soil, they rise of themselves out of the subject.

IV. *The Arrangement of the different Parts of a Composition.*

It is necessary that all parts of a speech be placed in their proper order, and united in such a manner, as to render the whole clear in itself and easy to be understood. A regular arrangement of parts is of the greatest advantage to the speaker, as it assists his memory, and carries him through his discourse, without tautology or confusion. He ought never to forget that perspicuity of *order* is as necessary as perspicuity of *language*.

Cicero divided an oration into six parts, namely, the *introduction*, *narration*, *proposition*, *confirmation*, *confutation*, and *conclusion*; and this is the arrangement usually adopted in systems of Rhetoric. The simplest division, however, is that recommended by Aristotle in his Rhetoric, consisting only of the *introduction*, the *statement* of the subject, its *proofs*, and the *conclusion*.

It is ridiculous to observe the Commentators in the Delphin Edition of Virgil endeavouring to fetter one of the most impassioned speeches of Dido^a, in the fourth book of the Eneid, in these technical chains: when even the greatest masters of the art themselves frequently departed from a strict observance of the rules of division. There are many excellent speeches, where several of these parts are wanting,

^a See the note on Eneid, 4. l. 305.

where the speaker, for instance, uses no introduction, as is the case in the first Oration against Catiline, but begins abruptly. There are others, which he finds it unnecessary to divide into parts, as in some orations of Demosthenes, but enters at once into his subject, and is borne along by the rapid tide of argument, till he reaches his conclusion. As however these have always been considered as the constituent parts of a speech, and as in every one some of them must necessarily be found, they properly obtain a place in all systems of Rhetoric.

Digression, transition, and amplification give great beauty, if judiciously managed, to Poetry and Eloquence. Of *digression* there are striking examples in Cicero's Oration for the poet Archias; where he leaves the main subject of the vindication of his client, to express his commendation of polite literature. *Transition* is absolutely necessary, where a discourse consists of many parts: but it is the rapid and abrupt transition, which is most to be admired for its effect in rousing the attention. Of this there are various instances in the Orations of Cicero.

Amplification does not merely signify a method of enlarging an object, but of representing it in the fullest and most comprehensive view, that it may in the most lively manner strike the mind, and influence the passions. Of this an instance is given in the noble encomium on eloquence, which forms the
introduction

introduction to this chapter. There is another example in the Oration of Cicero for the Manilian Law; when, having first lamented the want of good generals at that time among the Romans, he expatiates upon the qualities requisite to constitute a complete commander; and closes his description with proving, that all these qualities were united in Pompey.

The power of eloquence appears in nothing to such advantage, as in copious expression, suited to the nature of the subject. A short detail is too often attended with obscurity, from an omission of some material circumstances. But when the images of things are drawn in their just proportion, painted in their proper colours, set in a clear and full light, and represented under different points of view, with all the strength and beauty of eloquence, they captivate the minds of the audience, and, by an irresistible force, move and bend them to the will of the speaker. And this is precisely the effect produced by the *Εναργεια*, or *evidentia*, so much insisted upon, and so fully described by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. This figure makes us, as it were, spectators of what is described; it requires plain and forcible, not metaphorical, language: it renders every object visible, distinct, and affecting; every being appears to live, move, and act; and every circumstance is with a happy selection of topics brought forward, that can convince the judgment, or affect the heart. No writers excel more in the display of this figure than Livy and Tacitus.

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The Orator, who wishes to obtain a lasting reputation, must be free from all insincerity. He only can address himself *effectually* to the hearts, and the feelings of others, whose mind glows with the warmth of sensibility, and whose arguments result from conviction. He must feel the influence of those passions and emotions, which he wishes to inspire. An assumed character and an affectation of feeling will not be long concealed under the mask of duplicity. The greatest orators were distinguished by the virtues which they laboured the most strenuously to inculcate. Demosthenes and Cicero were eminent for a patriotic spirit; and those speeches, into which they have infused it, have always attracted most admiration from the world.

IV. *Propriety of Delivery and Action.*

IV. In the delivery of a speech great judgment is necessary; and there is no part of eloquence, which stands more in need of instructions. The orator must be careful to avoid the extremes of awkwardness and affectation; he must not be inanimate on the one hand, or theatrical on the other. If he be too rapid in his delivery, he will not be understood; if he be too slow, he will be tiresome. To well regulated tones, emphasis and pauses, must be united propriety of delivery and action. It is justly remarked by Cicero, that every thought

and emotion of the soul have their peculiar expression of voice, features, and gesture; and the whole body, every variation of the face, and tone of the voice, like the strings of a musical instrument, act agreeably to the impulse they receive from the mind. The correspondence of passions and emotions with expression, as it is shewn in real life, must be attentively observed, and to follow some good living example will be highly advantageous. More fully to stimulate his exertions let him advert to the effects which have been produced by excellence in this branch of his art. Was it not the impassioned delivery of Demosthenes, to which his rival Æschines has left such a remarkable and such an honourable testimony, that gave resistless persuasion to his speeches? Was it not the indignant countenance, the animated tone, and the judicious action of Cicero, which communicated such commanding influence and powerful weight to his arguments, when he confounded the audacious Catiline? And was it not the dignified air, and the persuasive mildness of Massillon, which added to his religious instructions so much force, when he drew from the Louis XIV. a confession of the power of sacred eloquence?

He who aspires to the character of a good public speaker, must make judgment the rule of his conduct; for no attainments can secure reputation without it. Nothing ought to be carried to an extreme;

extreme; the flights of imagination must be restrained by discretion, and propriety must give laws to every effort. Thus will he take the surest road to excellence; he will be bold, not rash; serious, but not severe; gay, not licentious; copious without redundancy, and sublime without extravagance or bombast. An adherence to the proper rules of the art will be his safest guide, will improve every natural endowment, and add the advantages of experience to the gifts of nature.

The eloquence of the moderns has rarely, if ever, reached the standard of excellence, which was attained by the ancients. The character of each is widely different. In Greece the public speaker was bold, impetuous, and sublime. In Rome he was more declamatory, florid, and pathetic. Fenelon has thus ingeniously distinguished the effects produced by the two great orators of Greece and Rome. "After hearing an oration of Tully, 'How finely and eloquently has he expressed himself!' said the Romans. After Demosthenes had spoke, 'Let us rise and march against Philip,' said the Athenians." In England the public speaker is temperate and cool, and addresses himself more to the reason of his audience, than to their passions. There is still great scope for the display of genius in the pulpit, at the bar, and in the houses of Parliament; and the path of fame is still left open to rising orators. The rules laid down by the ancients, as the principles involved in those rules are of general use, may be studied to great
P 2 advantage,

advantage, although much judgment is necessary for their proper application ; and allowance must be made for the difference in modern taste and modern manners.

There seem to be certain circumstances in the English character and genius, which are unfavourable to the perfection of eloquence, and may render our attempts to succeed as public speakers in the great assemblies of the kingdom more difficult than they were in antient times. The English excel in good sense, which makes them superior to any attempt to amuse their fancy, or agitate their passions. They are also very diffident, which makes them regard it as a proof of arrogance to offer any thing but the dictates of plain reason to men, whom they may think as enlightened and well informed as themselves. It is for these reasons that the public speakers in our Houses of Parliament confine themselves chiefly to plain statements of fact and solid argument. No speaker would be long heard with pleasure, or perhaps with patience, who should exactly copy the florid style, circuitous arguments, and technical divisions of Cicero. Burke attempted much in this manner, but he was not often successful. Of all examples which antiquity has left, no one seems so well adapted to an Englishman as Demosthenes. His orations display a manly freedom of thought, a depth and clearness of judgment, a perfect insight as well into the business of the state, as into the character of his countrymen ; and all his ideas are clothed in language

guage rarely figurative, but always energetic. His transitions are bold and forcible. He was aware that his audience would have thought he was trifling with them, if he had aimed at mere pomp of declamation, or had scattered over his speeches the common flowers of Rhetoric. He was too ardent to be diffuse, and too eager for action, to waste his time upon the circuitous arts of persuasion. It was his great object to astonish by unexpected flashes of thought, to terrify by lively images of danger, and to convince by the shortest and most conclusive arguments; and what rendered him still more worthy of imitation, the fire of enthusiastic patriotism animated all his most celebrated speeches^y.

The propriety of recommending Demosthenes is confirmed by the practice of eminent speakers. The Marquis of Wharton formed his son to be one of the greatest, and at the same time one of the readiest speakers then in England, by making him get by heart whole orations of Demosthenes, and repeat them with all the graces of action and pronunciation^z. It is a traditionary tale in Scotland, that the great Lord Mansfield was accustomed, in his early youth, to declaim upon his native mountains the most celebrated speeches

^y See Hume's Essays, Vol. I. p. 109. Travels of Anacharis, Vol. II. p. 116. Vol. V. p. 184. Leland's preface to his translation of Demosthenes.

^z Monboddo, Vol. IV. p. 244.

of Cicero and Demosthenes, and his own excellent translations^a. Such was the practice of the great Lord Chatham, and from the following masterly character given of him by Lord Chesterfield, we may conclude, that he imbibed the spirit, and caught the manner of his great original. "His eloquence was of every kind, and he excelled in the argumentative, as well as the declamatory way. But his invectives were terrible, and uttered with such energy of diction, and such dignity of action and countenance, that he intimidated those who were the most willing and the best able to encounter him. Their arms fell out of their hands, and they shrunk under the ascendant, which his genius gained over theirs."

The young orator, if he has judgment, may catch many of the sparks of eloquence from every distinguished example, and may borrow many useful hints and instructions from the parliamentary debates, particularly the most interesting which have taken place in both Houses, during the last and present reigns. But complete success in this career must be the result of eminent talents, deep study, and accurate observations on men and business, directed by sound judgment and stimulated not so much by a love of glory, as zeal for the good of the public. While he follows the best rules and examples of eloquence, let him avoid all servile imitation; let him not, to use the apposite and beautiful

^a Lives of eminent Lawyers.

illustration of Quintilian, resemble the stream that is carried through a channel formed by art for its course, but rather let him imitate the bold river which overflows a whole valley, and where it does not find, can force a passage by its own natural impetuosity and strength.

CHAPTER I.

The Study of History in General.

CURIOSITY is one of the strongest and most active principles of human nature. Through the successive stages of life, it seeks with avidity for those gratifications, which are congenial with the different faculties of the mind. The child as soon as the imagination begins to open, eagerly listens to the tales of his nurse; the youth, at a time of life, when the love of what is new and uncommon is quickened by feeling, is enchanted by the magic of romances and novels; the man, whose mature judgment inclines him to the pursuit of truth, applies to genuine history, which even in old age continues to be a favourite object of his attention, since his desire to be acquainted with the tribulations of others has nearly an equal power over his mind, with the propensity to relate what has happened to himself.

CLASS THE THIRD.

HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

The Study of History in general.

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The love of fame, and a desire to communicate information, have influenced men in almost every age and every nation, to leave behind them some memorials of their existence, actions, and discoveries. Thus has the curiosity of mankind secured, by methods at first very rude and incomplete, and in succeeding times by records more improved and satisfactory, its favourite enjoyments.

The method of conveying to posterity an account of important facts, was in the earliest ages of the world very vague and uncertain. The most obvious and easy mode was first resorted to. When Joshua led the twelve tribes of Israel over the river Jordan, in a miraculous manner, he set up twelve stones for a memorial; but it was necessary for tradition to explain the circumstances which gave rise to it. *Joshua spake unto the children of Israel, saying, when your children shall ask their fathers, in time to come, what mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land^b.* Songs were the only records among the ancient Germans; and their war-song, when rushing to battle, recalled to mind the exploits of some departed hero. Poets who sung to the harp the praises of deceased warriors at the tables of kings, are mentioned by Homer: the Scandinavians, Gauls, and Germans, had their bards, and the savages of America preserved similar records of the past in the wild poetry

^b Joshua, c. iv, v. 21.

of their country. To supply the defects of such oral tradition as this, founders of states, and leaders of colonies, gave their own names to cities and kingdoms. Devices were fixed upon shields and banners, and national festivals and games were established to commemorate extraordinary events. From such imperfect attempts to rescue the past from the ravages of time and oblivion, the progress to inscriptions of various kinds was made soon after the invention of letters. The Babylonians recorded their first astronomical observations upon bricks; and the most antient monuments of Chinese literature, were inscribed upon large tables of very hard stone. The names of magistrates, and the recital of the most remarkable events, which happened during their transaction of public business, were preserved. Two very curious monuments of this kind are still extant, the names of the consuls registered upon the Capitoline marbles at Rome; and the Arundelian marbles, upon which are inscribed in Greek capital letters, some records of the early history of Greece, from the time of Cecrops down to the age of Alexander the Great. They were brought from the Island of Paros, and are now preserved in the University of Oxford. Such was the commencement of annals, and of a regular series of chronology. In succeeding times, when nations became more civilized, and the various branches of literature were cultivated, private persons employed themselves in recording the actions of their contemporaries, or their ancestors, and history by degrees assumed its proper form and character.

character. It was at first like painting the rude outline of an unskilful designer ; but after repeated essays, the great masters of the art arose, and produced the harmonious light and shade, the glowing colours and animated groups of a perfect picture.

With a particular view to the works of eminent historians, both ancient and modern, it may be useful to consider,

I. The *Divisions* of History, and the assistance which it derives from other studies.

II. The *Advantages* of a knowledge of History.

III. The comparative merits of *ancient* and *modern* Historians.

IV. The *Qualifications requisite to form an accomplished* Historian, in order to establish a standard, by which to measure the merits of Historians in general.

I. History, in the general sense of the word, signifies *a true relation of facts and events* ; or, considered in a moral point of view, it is that lively philosophy, which, laying aside the formality of rules, supplies the place of experience, and teaches us to act with propriety and honour according to the examples of others. The province of history is so extensive, that it is connected with every branch of knowledge ; and so various and abundant are its stores, that all arts, sciences, and professions are indebted to it for many of the materials and principles,

ciples, upon which they depend. It opens the widest prospect to the eyes of mankind in the spacious fields of literature, and is one of the most pleasing and important objects of study, to which the mind can be directed.

To draw the line of proper distinction between authentic and fabulous history, is the first object of the discerning reader. Let him not burthen his memory with events that ought perhaps to pass for fables; let him not fatigue his attention with the progress of empires, or the succession of kings, which are thrown back into the most remote ages. He will find that little dependence is to be placed upon the relations of those affairs in the Pagan world, which preceded the invention of letters, and were built upon mere oral tradition. Let him leave the dynasties of the Egyptian kings, the expeditions of Sesostris, Bacchus, and Jason, and the exploits of Hercules and Theseus, for poets to embellish, or chronologists to arrange. The fabulous accounts of these heroes of antiquity may remind him of the sandy deserts, lofty mountains, and frozen oceans, which are laid down in the maps of the ancient geographers, to conceal their ignorance of remote countries. Let him hasten to firm ground, where he may safely stand, and behold the striking events, and memorable actions, which the light of authentic record displays to his view. They alone are amply sufficient to enrich his memory, and to point out to him well attested examples of all that is

is magnanimous, as well as all that is vile ;—of all that debases, and all that ennobles mankind.

History, considered with respect to the nature of its subjects, may be divided into *general* and *particular* ; and with respect to time, into *ancient* and *modern*. Ancient history commences with the creation of the world, and is by Bossuet, the learned author of an universal history, extended to the reign of Charlemagne, Emperor of Germany and France, in the year of our Lord 800. Modern history beginning with that period reaches down to the present times. General history relates to nations and public affairs, and may be subdivided into *sacred*, *ecclesiastical*, and *profane*. Biography, or the account of the lives of eminent persons, memoirs, and letters, constitute particular history. *Geography* and *Chronology* are important aids, and give order, regularity, and clearness to them all. Geography and Chronology are each derived from two Greek words. By the former is to be understood a description of the world as consisting of land and water ; by the latter, the mode of computing time. These will form the subjects of a distinct chapter.

For information upon the subject of sacred history, the student must resort to the holy Bible, as the highest authority, to the works of Josephus, and the Annals of Archbishop Usher, as they will furnish him with very useful illustrations.

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The affairs of the Christian Church, comprehending the lives, characters, and conduct of those who have maintained a pure and apostolical faith, as well as of such sectarists as have deviated from it, are comprised in *Ecclesiastical history*. It describes the nature of religious establishments, and displays the various opinions of Christians upon the most important of all subjects. This subject has exercised the diligence and displayed the learning of many eminent writers of various ages; but the reader of general history may find sufficient gratification for his curiosity in the works of Eusebius, and Mosheim.

From the people of the ancient world we first select the *Jews*, as the particular objects of our attention. They were favoured with the knowledge of the one true God. Their history carries us back to the most remote antiquity; and its importance is increased in the greatest degree by its connexion with the Christian Revelation.

The next branch of general history is that of *Antient Greece*. It presents a nation of heroes, philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and artists, who spoke the noblest language which ever graced the tongue of man, and who have been the guides and the instructors of all succeeding nations in arts, sciences, and philosophy. Greece was the source of light, that has irradiated a great portion of the globe.

The

The *Romans* in the order of excellence, as well as of time, followed the Grecians: their military talents were displayed in a long succession of conquests and triumphs in every part of the ancient world. The monuments of their genius, which the ravages of time have spared, render them next to the Greeks the boast of history, and the glory of mankind.

The *History of England*, has the strongest claims to our attention. It abounds with such events and transactions, and displays such characters and actions, as it is our duty and our interest to study; and we are attracted to a perusal of its eventful records by the ties of patriotism, and a congeniality of manners.

From *Modern history* in general we select those parts which relate to the most important transactions and events, particularly adverting to those discoveries and institutions, which distinguish it from ancient times, and have contributed essentially to the present state of opinions and manners.

There are certain foreign nations, which, by the extent of their dominions, their civil polity, or their connexion with our own country, may excite our curiosity to learn their former state: but it will not answer any important purpose to dwell, for instance, upon the affairs of France under the Merovingian, or Carlovingian families; or upon the state of Germany before the reign of Charles V. Let

not the scholar waste too much time, which may be more profitably employed in other studies, in poring over the works of Thuanus, Mariana, and Froissart; or the numerous volumes of the Universal History.

With respect indeed to foreign nations, the objects of his most useful attention are the actual power, the nature of their present governments, the state of civilization, sciences, and arts, their natural and artificial advantages, their population, produce, commerce, and relative importance in the scale of political greatness. This constitutes a branch of study, which has been of late years much cultivated by the Germans, and is distinguished by the name of *Statistics*. Travellers and statesmen must not claim this study as their own exclusive province, since it will be found extremely useful to every English gentleman, and will qualify him to form a just estimate of the relative condition, power, and importance of his own country.

Biography is a branch of history, which is placed high in point of importance and moral utility. Biographers by their accurate researches supply the deficiencies of the historian. What the latter gives us only in outlines and sketches, the former present in more complete and highly finished portraits. Their province does not merely extend to those who have acted upon the great theatre of the world, as sovereigns, statesmen, and warriors; but to all who have improved human life
by

by their useful discoveries, adorned it by their works of genius, or benefited mankind by their examples. With what pleasure do we select a Boyle, a Newton, an Addison, a Locke, a Radcliffe, a Howard, and a Hanway, from the multitudes that surround them, and make particular inquiries into their characters and conduct! To contemplate such men, not inflamed by vain ambition, or courting popularity, but giving dignity to the walks of private life by the efforts of genius, and the exertions of philanthropy, is a high gratification to the mind, and increases its love of those actions which come within the reach of general imitation.

“To find that great lengths have actually been gone in learning and virtue, that high degrees of perfection have actually been attained by men like ourselves, intangled among the infirmities, the temptations, the opposition from wicked men, and the other various evils of life; how does this show us to ourselves as utterly inexcusable, if we do not endeavour to reach the heights we know have been gained by others of our fellow-creatures? Biography sets before us the whole character of a person, who has made himself eminent either by his virtues or his vices; shews us how he came first to take a right or a wrong turn, the prospects which invited him to aspire to higher degrees of glory, or the delusions which misled him from his virtue and his peace; the circumstances which raised him to true greatness, or the rocks on which he split, and sunk to infamy. And how can we more effectually, or in a more entertaining manner, learn the important lesson, what we ought to pursue, and what to avoid?” Burgh's *Dignity of Human Nature*, p. 167.

“It is a thing to be wished, that every one would study the life of some great man distinguished by employs, to which himself may be destined by Providence.” Du Fresnoy, tom. i. p. 43.

No species of writing gives a more perfect insight into the minds of men, than their *Letters*. In the letters of persons of distinction, we expect the justness of observation, which belongs to history, and the ease and good humour of elegant conversation. They place us in the situation of their correspondents, and we seem honoured by the confidence of the great and good, the witty and the gay of various ages and countries. They inform us what they thought in their retired moments, when, withdrawn from the bustle of the world, they gave free scope to their unrestrained opinions, and poured them without reserve into the bosoms of their friends. We may remark the immediate effects produced by good or bad fortune, and may catch the spirit of their virtues immediately from themselves. Here wit, humour, and genius, have indulged their natural fallies, and adorned the common occurrences of life in the most pleasing dress. Among the numerous instances, which might be selected of epistolary excellence, we distinguish the letters of Cicero, which give an insight into the eminent characters of his eventful times. Pliny, in Epistles remarkable for neatness and precision, expresses the dictates of a cultivated and generous mind. If we turn our attention to our own country, we shall find that the piety and the affection of Lady Ruffel, the quaintness and pleasantry of Howel, the manliness and political sagacity of Strafford, the philosophical exactness and cool judgment of Locke, the

the simplicity of Bishop Rundle, the moralising vein of Johnson, the taste and elegance of Gray, the ease of Cowper, and the sprightliness of Lady Wortley Montague, mark their respective letters with originality, and gives us the most pleasing pictures of their minds. We naturally wish to know all we can of such persons, and feel an increasing interest in their other productions; for we prize those writers the most, who combine the charms of entertainment and pleasure with the lessons of instruction.

There are other instances, by which the study of history may be promoted in an agreeable manner, and the events which it records may be illustrated. Coins and medals, inscriptions^d, gems, and statues, shew us the progress of ancient arts, and ascertain many curious particulars respecting characters, instruments, buildings, and ceremonies. Coins and medals indeed are particularly serviceable in that respect. The representation of so many events is delineated upon them, that they illustrate several passages in ancient writers, and confirm doubtful facts. Sometimes they are not only the assistants but the substitutes of history. Gibbon remarks that if all the historians of that period were lost, medals, inscriptions, and other monuments, would be sufficient to record the travels of the emperor Hadrian. Coins are to general history, what miniatures are

^d The comparative Use of Medals and Inscriptions by the learned Scipio Maffei may be found in Du Fresnoy's new Method of studying History, vol. i. p. 241. 323, &c.

to historical pictures; and when arranged in exact order, they form a chronological abstract of a picturesque and lively kind.

But the *Laws* of a country are more intimately connected with its history, and indeed, more accurately speaking, constitute an essential part of it. They show the genius of a people, illustrate their manners, and enable us to trace their progress from rude independence to due regular order and government. The historians of antiquity, indeed, taking it for granted that the laws of their respective countries would be as well known to others as to themselves, have not paid sufficient attention to this subject. From the turbulent scenes of public affairs, from battles and the conflicts of contending factions, we can derive little knowledge of the internal state of manners and customs. An acquaintance with jurisprudence is calculated to supply this information; and even from the ancient laws, extremely concise as they are, we may infer with a great degree of probability, what the state of the country was, in any particular respect, when a new law was enacted. The remedy recommended, points out the nature of the disease. For instance, the encroachments of luxury in Rome, may be marked by the Oppian law, which prohibited the Roman ladies from wearing ornaments to their dress, which exceeded the value of an ounce of gold; and by a decree of the Senate obtained by Cornelius, which limited to a particular sum the expence of funerals.

II. *The*

II. *The Advantages of a Knowledge of History.*

If we consider the knowledge of history with regard to its application, we shall find that it is eminently useful to us in three respects, viz. as it appears in a *moral*, a *political*, and a *religious* point of view.

In a moral point of view, it is beneficial to mankind at large, as a guide to their conduct. In a political—as it suggests useful expedients to those who exercise the public offices of the state, whether they are kings, ministers, or magistrates; or as it enables us to form, by comparison with those who have gone before them, a just estimate of their merits. In a religious—as it teaches us to regard the Supreme Being as the governor of the universe, and the sovereign disposer of all events.

The faculties of the soul are improved by exercise; and nothing is more proper to enlarge, to quicken, and to refine them, than a survey of the conduct of mankind. History supplies us with a detail of facts, and submits them to our examination before we are called into active life. By observation and reflection upon others we begin an early acquaintance with human nature, extend our views of the moral world, and are enabled to acquire such a habit of discernment, and correct-

ness of judgment, as others obtain only by experience. We thus by anticipation are conversant with the busy scenes of the world; by revolving the lives of sages and heroes, we exercise our virtues in a review, and prepare them for approaching action. We learn the motives, the opinions, and the passions of the men who have lived before us; and the fruit of that study is a more perfect knowledge of ourselves, and a correction of our failings by their examples. At the same time we form those general principles of conduct which must necessarily be true and commendable, because they are founded upon the immutable decrees of right reason, and are sanctioned by the uniform authority and practice of the wise and good of all ages.

Our own experience is imperfect, but the examples of ancient times are complete. Actual observation gives only a partial knowledge of mankind; great events and important transactions open very slowly upon us; and the shortness of human life enables us only to see detached parts of them. We are not placed at a proper distance to judge rightly of their real nature and magnitude. Hurried on by our passions, and misled by interest and prejudice, we view the affairs of the present times through an obscure and a partial medium, and frequently form very wrong opinions of them. On the contrary, the examples of history are distinct and clear, they are presented to us at full length, and we can contemplate them in their origin,

origin, progress, and termination. We consider them at our leisure, and decide upon the actions of those, who are removed by time to a great distance from us, with a cool and dispassionate judgment.

Experience and the knowledge of history reflect mutual light, and afford mutual assistance. Without the former, no one can act with address and dexterity. Without the latter, no one can add to the natural resources of his own mind a knowledge of those precepts and examples, which have tended to form the character and promote the glory of eminent men. Scipio Africanus employed many of his leisure hours in reading the works of Xenophon; and the Commentaries of Cæsar improved the military talents of the illustrious Prince Eugene of Savoy.

Nor are we without examples in our own country of the advantage resulting from this kind of knowledge. General Wolfe was a man of education as well as military genius. He was once shewing some officers how expert his men were at a new mode of attacking and retreating upon hills, and asked one of them, after the performance, what he thought of it. "I think, said he, I see something here of the practice of the Carduchi, who harassed Xenophon when he commanded the ten thousand Greeks, and hung upon his rear in his retreat over the mountains. You are right, said General Wolfe, I took the hint from thence, and I see you are a man of reading; but

our friends there are surpris'd at what I have shewn them, because they have read nothing^f."

History contributes to divest us of many unreasonable prejudices, by enlarging our acquaintance with the world. It sets us at liberty from that blind partiality to our native country, which is the sure mark of a contracted mind, when due merit is not allowed to any other. It may be serviceable either as the assistant of Foreign Travel, or as its substitute, by removing an aversion to nations and institutions different from our own. It rectifies our opinions with respect to ancient and modern times, and thus enables us to form a just estimate of mankind in all countries as well as in all ages.

This study likewise tends to strengthen our abhorrence of vice; and creates a relish for true greatness, and solid glory. We see the hero and the philosopher represented in their proper colours;

^f Rev. W. Jones's Works, vol. xi. And verilie they bee fewest in number, that bee happie or wise by unlearned experience. And looke well upon the former life of those fewe, whether your example be old or young, who without learning have gathered, by long experience, a little wisdom and some happiness; and when you doe consider what mischiefes they have committed, what daungers they have escaped, (and twentie for one doe perish in the adventure) then think well with yourselfe, whether ye would, that your own sonne should cum to wisdom and happiness by the way of *such experience* or no. ASCHAM's Schoolmaster.

and

and as magnanimity, honour, integrity, and generosity, when displayed in illustrious instances, naturally make a favourable impresson on our minds, our attachment to them is gradually formed. The fire of virtuous emulation is lighted, and we long to practise what we have been taught to approve.

History likewise is the foundation, upon which is built the true science of government. It is the proper school for princes, politicians, and legislators. They need not have recourse for instruction to the Republic of Plato, the Utopia of More, or the Oceana of Harrington. In their deliberations upon state affairs they can form no safer plans for the guidance of their conduct, than from the contemplation of facts. In the records of various states they may observe by what means national happiness has been successfully pursued, and public liberty has been firmly established: in what manner laws have answered the ends of their institution in the reformation of manners, and the advancement of the general good; and thence they may draw such conclusions as may be most advantageous in the regulation of the affairs of their own country.

¶ Hoc illud est præcipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuæque reipublicæ quod imitere, capias; inde sædum inceptu, sædum exitu, quod vites. LIVII PRÆFATIO.

In

In the volumes of history likewise we see the most deceitful and crafty men stripped of the disguise of artifice and dissimulation, their designs developed, and their stratagems exposed. By the fall of the great and powerful into a state of disgrace and indigence, as well by the revolutions of empires, we are not so liable to be astonished at the events, which pass before our own eyes. The reverses of fortune so frequently recorded in the pages of former times convince us of the mutability of worldly affairs, and the precariousness of all human grandeur.

The portraits, busts, and statues of the hero, the legislator, the patriot, and the philosopher, form a most edifying school for the ingenious mind. The noble youths of Rome, accustomed constantly to behold in the vestibules of their houses, the images of their ancestors decorated with the emblems of the highest offices of the state, and crowned with the wreaths of victory, were fired with the love of glory, and strove to emulate their exploits^h. History in a similar manner, by transmitting the spirit of excellence from one mind to

^h Sæpe audiivi Q. Maximum & P. Scipionem civitatis nostræ præclaros viros solitos ita dicere, cum majorum imagines intuerentur, vehementissimè sibi animum ad virtutem accendi; scilicet non ceram illam neque figuram tantam vim in sese habere; sed memoria rerum gestarum eam flammam egregiis viris in pectore crescere, neque prius sedari, quam virtus eorum famam atque gloriam adæquaverit. Sallust. Bell. Jugurth.

another,

another, excites a desire for whatever is fair and good, and engages even the passions on the side of the judgment. It fixes the strongest and most lasting impressions upon the mind, sanctions the arguments of reason, and gives life to the lessons of morality.

How tame and spiritless are the precepts of wisdom, even when taught by a Socrates or a Plato, if compared with the more animated beauties of virtue, exemplified in the actions of an Aristides, or a Phocion! To the former we only give the cold assent of the judgment; of the latter we express our admiration with rapture; they receive the promptest tribute of our applause, they excite the spirit of emulation, and we are eager to shew by our conduct the influence which they have gained over our hearts.

But what is this homage, which is paid almost involuntarily to such great and illustrious examples? It is undoubtedly the voice of nature, and the suggestion of reason pure and uncorrupted by the bad practices of the world. It is the decision of a correct judgment, and the proof of a genuine taste for true greatness and solid glory. In order therefore to form a virtuous character, and to be distinguished for the most laudable actions, it is an object of the first concern to be ever attentive to this voice, and to conform to its wise and friendly admonitions.

While

While history holds up to the view instances of eminent virtues and splendid actions, she calls not the student to a *servile* imitation of her examples; for thus might he unintentionally be led to error and misconduct. No two men were ever precisely the same in moral or intellectual qualities, or in situations exactly similar; and therefore no one can with safety conclude, that the same conduct could in all respects be prudent for him, which his predecessor has followed. Expedients springing from our own minds are formed with more clearness, and executed with more spirit, than those which are derived from the imitation of others. While the imitator is revolving the precedents of past times, and minutely examining them with reference to his own case, he may suffer the favourable opportunity for action to escape him, and may be undone for ever;—or, supposing he should take any particular example for his guide, from a want of accurate discrimination, he may be betrayed into some fatal error. The acute and the discerning will not fail to combine originality of plan with the guidance of precedent; they will make every proper allowance for the various dispositions and manners of the times; they will instantly perceive where circumstances *differ* or *agree*; and will adopt only so much of the example, as is applicable to the exigency of their own affairs.

History rises to the highest degree of importance, and attains the full dignity of its character,
by

by fixing our attention upon the conduct of divine Providence in the moral government of the world. It is clear to every one, who takes the most superficial view of the past, that great events have often been effected by trifling means; that the consequences of actions have been much more extensive, more fatal or calamitous, than were originally intended by the agents themselves; that the designs of Providence have been brought about by the caprice of human tempers, or the violence of human passions; and that craft, tyranny, and cruelty have rarely escaped their just, though sometimes long delayed punishment. The result of actions has been widely different from the end proposed by those who planned them; and great revolutions have been effected in direct opposition to the projects of the persons, who were the chief instruments of them. Such extraordinary discoveries draw us much nearer, and give us a much better insight into the operations of the Deity, than those occurrences, in which the causes are more equal to the effects; as is the case with the common affairs of life. Thus history becomes the handmaid of religion, and opens to us the most wonderful prospects of the divine interposition in the government of the worldⁱ.

Exclusive

ⁱ I subjoin the following remarkable instance from Robertson's Charles Vith, Book 10, C. 5. "It is a singular circumstance, that the Reformation should be indebted for its full establishment in Germany, to the same hand which had formerly brought it to the brink of destruction, and that both events

Exclusive of the general uses of history, there is a particular application of it, which every one naturally makes to his own pursuits, his own age, and his own habits of thinking. The politician searches the records of past ages for the rise and fall of states, the measures which advanced their greatness, and the causes which precipitated them into ruin. The foldier looks for military achievements, the conduct of generals, and the discipline of armies. Cause and effect engage the attention of the philosopher; and the man of science is interested by the description of the phenomena of nature. The antiquarian studies the ancient laws, customs, and dresses, and other peculiarities of nations. The man who is advanced in years, is gratified with remarking in the same book those

events should be accomplished by the same arts of dissimulation. The ends, however, which Maurice, the Elector of Saxony, had in view at these different junctures, seem to have been more attended to, than the means by which he attained them. It is no less worthy of observation, that the French King, a Monarch zealous for the Catholic Faith, should, at the very same time when he was persecuting his own protestant subjects with all the fierceness of bigotry, employ his power in order to maintain and protect the Reformation in the Empire; and that the league for this purpose, which proved so fatal to the Romish Church, should be negociated and signed by a Roman Catholic Bishop. *So wonderfully doth the wisdom of God superintend and regulate the caprice of human passions, and render them subservient towards the accomplishment of his own purposes.*" In the preface to Sir W. Raleigh's History of the World, many similar examples are taken from the early part of the History of England.

sentiments

sentiments and actions, which he disregarded in his youth; and the habits of thinking, which he has formed at one particular period of life, induce him to search for different sources of entertainment and instruction at another. Thus every person is influenced by his peculiar taste: when he consults the volumes of history, he discovers something in them to suit the complexion of his own mind; and, from a natural partiality to his own pursuits, may be inclined to think, that his favourite historian wrote only for his use and entertainment.

Readers, however, of every age and description, may find in history ample materials for improving their judgment, by tracing the due connexion which subsists between causes and effects. They ought not to be satisfied with the recital of events alone, but endeavour to investigate the circumstances which combined either to produce, to hasten, or to retard them; as well as the manner of their operation, and the degree of their influence.

In whatever abstruseness the science of politics may be supposed to be involved, it is probable, that the motives which lead to the performance of many remarkable actions do not lie very deep in the human mind. The actions themselves may indeed dazzle by their splendour, or surprize by their novelty; but still they might probably be the result of no greater reach of capacity, than that which is exerted in the management of common concerns.

There

There is no state of public affairs, to which the operation of the passions, the virtues, the vices, the calls of public or private interest, and the love of glory, will not apply; and into some one of these may be fairly resolved the conduct of monarchs, statesmen, and warriors.

CHAPTER II.

The comparative merits of ancient and modern Historians.

AS there is no species of composition, to which the faculties of the mind have been more strenuously or more laudably directed in various ages of the world, and from which more useful information may be derived, than history; it is doubtless very interesting to consider, and to determine the comparative merits of ancient and modern historians. With regard to the nature of their subjects, as the pursuits of mankind are now so much diversified, modern writers have great advantages over the ancient. The prevailing employment of ancient times was war; the pages of the historians are therefore filled with battles and sieges, which, from the time of Homer to the revival of learning in Europe, weary our attention by uniformity of subject. A more particular regard has in subsequent ages been paid to religion, government, laws, customs, and commerce; and every circumstance relative to the conduct of individuals, tending in any degree to the developement of the genius of a people, has been scrutinized and discussed. It is not usual for modern historians to introduce those formal harangues of generals in the field, or of statesmen in the senate, which constitute so large a share of the works of antiquity.

antiquity. However acute they may be in point of argument, appropriate as to character, or dramatic as to effect, they contradict our notions of probability, and only serve, by the interposition of the supposed speaker, to display the eloquence of the writer. The speeches of Cæsar in his Commentaries, and those which Dion Cassius composed for him, are very different in circumstances and arguments. Of all that the ancients have left us, none approach so nearly to nature and probability as those of the Old Testament and Herodotus. The moderns have a wider range of political views; and, from their more extensive knowledge of various countries, they are better acquainted with the nature of government, and the comparative state of man.

Ever since the establishment of the regular conveyance of letters by posts, channels of easy and expeditious information have been opened; and the intercourse between one country and another has been more frequent, in consequence of travelling being rendered safe, commodious, and expeditious. The wide diffusion of literature likewise, extending more and more since the revival of learning, has multiplied authentic documents; valuable papers are often deposited in public libraries, where they are accessible to the curious and inquisitive; or, if preserved by individuals, they are soon discovered by the active spirit of inquiry, and communicated to the world.

An abundance of materials for History, however, is not the only requisite to inform the mind, or secure the approbation of the reader. One great fault of the modern historians is prolixity. The volumes of Thuanus, Rapin, and Carte, are calculated to fatigue the most vigilant eye, and oppress the powers of the most retentive memory. Such writers exhaust attention by magnifying trifles into importance, or diffuse a coldness over their works by a minute detail of uninteresting affairs, or unimportant remarks. Hence the reader, unless he wishes to consult the author upon some particular subject, turns over many a page with indifference, and finally quits the historian with disgust.

The contrast with the ancients in this respect is remarkably striking. The ancients draw characters, and describe events, with a few masterly strokes, and paint in such glowing colours of language, that they seize the attention at once, and captivate the mind. Their conciseness gives them great advantage, and tends to preserve the interest excited by their descriptions. All is animated and forcible; the representations are taken immediately from recent facts; the portraits of human nature are drawn from the life; and the busy scene of action, the tumults of war, and the reverses of fortune, are placed immediately before our eyes. They write as if they came immediately from the field of battle, or the deliberations of the council. The situation of many of the ancients was particularly favourable to this lively species of composition; for Thucydides,

dides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, Sallust, and Tacitus, were actors in many of the important scenes they portray, and wrote under the influence of the deepest impressions of reality and experience^k.

If however we read with a view to our immediate improvement, the modern historian claims our more particular regard. He describes actions and events, which have a necessary connexion with the times in which we live, and which have an immediate influence upon the government and constitution of our country. The ancients may astonish us by relating those sudden revolutions, which transferred empires by a single battle: but the moderns display more fully the causes and consequences of great events, and edify us by examples more con-

^k From various proofs of the truth of this observation which occur to my recollection, I select the following description of the approach of the Persian army to engage that of Cyrus the younger, in which Xenophon himself served, and probably was a spectator of the circumstances he mentions:

Και ήδη τε ην μεσον ήμερας, και ουπω καταφανεις ησαν οι πολεμιοι· ήνικα δε δειλη εγενετο, εφανη κονιορτος ωςπερ νεφαλη λευκη, χρονω δε ου συχω υσερον, ωςπερ μελαινια τις εν τω πεδίω επι πολυ· οτε δε εγγυτερον εγγινοντο, ταχα δε και χαλκος τις ηστραπτε, και αι λογγαι και αι ταξεις καταφανεις εγγινοντο. Xenoph. Anabasis, p. 70, Edit. Zeunii.

Compare this with the descriptions of those modern historians, who pass their lives in their libraries, and the difference will immediately appear. One of the ancients I have mentioned might address such persons in the words of Marius: “Quæ illi audire et legere solent, eorum partem vidi egomet, alia gessi; quæ illi literis, ego militando didici; nunc vos existimate facta an dicta pluris sint.”

genial

genial with our peculiar habits and manners; and which come more within the reach of our imitation.

I. The Qualifications of an accomplished Historian.

In order to erect a standard by which to measure the merits of historians, let us form to our minds one of the greatest characters which can adorn the literature of a country, and endeavour to point out the qualifications, by which an accomplished historian ought to be distinguished.

Such a writer chooses a subject adapted to his talents and situation. He is most fortunate, when his stores of knowledge are supplied by experience, and his own observation; as was the case with some of the best historians of antiquity, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, and Tacitus; and in modern times Sully and Clarendon. Or if he has not been himself an agent in the transactions he records, he has recourse to the purest sources of information. Although it is impossible always to select such a subject as admits of strict unity of design; yet he is convinced that the argument is most noble and most interesting, when he can preserve, without distracting the attention of the reader by useless digressions, a close connexion of all the parts, and in the detail of which he can proceed by a regular course of events to some important and grand conclusion. This historical unity of subject may be best illustrated by

the retreat of the ten thousand by Xenophon, and the Roman History of Livy. The action is not from the beginning interrupted by extraneous subjects, but ascends from one incident to another, till the principal point is reached. Impressed with a deep sense of his duty, he pays the most sacred regard to truth; and his diligence in ascertaining facts is equal to his accuracy in stating them. As far as the infirmities of human nature will allow, he is divested of the stubbornness of prejudice, the violence of passion, and the predilection of party. He is convinced that the ornaments of composition may properly be employed to embellish truth, but that no ornaments can compensate for wilful misrepresentation. He guards against the flights and the delusions of imagination, and is therefore careful not to convert history into romance, or merely adorn his subject with the arguments of philosophical dissertation, or the pomp of figurative style. His fondness for his work infuses vigour into his conceptions, and the delicacy of his taste gives elegance to his style, and purity to his sentiments. He is not satisfied with taking a superficial view of affairs, but with acute penetration examines their proximate and remote causes, separates them from the disguises under which they are concealed, and descends to the true motives of conduct¹. He breaks through the obstacles that
stop

¹ It will doubtless occur to my readers, that when I made these observations, I had Gibbon in view. It would lead me into too prolix a detail, if I were to point out how much he
has

stop the progress of vulgar intellect; and produces those reflections, in which truth, penetration, and novelty are blended with peculiar skill, and strike with certain effect. He distinguishes from the surrounding crowds the examples of eminent persons, and presents their pictures either completely finished, or marked by a few bold and expressive outlines. Of their domestic, as well as public conduct, he selects such circumstances as will give the clearest insight into their tempers and manners. In his developement of characters, he regards the MORAL tendency of history, which is its noblest and most valuable end. He neither blackens his characters with the aspersions of malevolence, chastises them with unjust satire, nor heightens their lustre with the varnish of adulation. If he feel any bias upon his mind, it is that of a true philanthropist; he is inclined to draw a veil over the failings of human nature, and not expose every vice and folly to the public. He divests himself as much as possible of local prejudices, considers himself as a citizen of the world, and weighs all characters of his own or foreign countries in the balance of impartial justice. Highly conducive

that by this road the ancient historians were led to
has betrayed his trust, and deserted the province of a good and fair historian. My readers are again referred to Dr. Whitaker's excellent pamphlet, in which his incorrect language, contradictions, digressions, obscurities, absurdities, and violations of decorum are stated with great clearness. See likewise a very able letter to Lord Sheffield, 1796: and the Bampton Lectures of 1790, 2d edition; where a violent attack made by Gibbon upon a very important part of the Gospel History is repelled.

may it prove to the reputation of his work, should he be as unbiassed by motives of partiality or aversion, as Tacitus was with respect to the Emperors, who were the subjects of his annals, when he declared that to him neither Galba, nor Otho, nor Vitellius were known either by benefits or injuries^m. As it is his main object to teach by example, he either makes his remarks with brevity, or leaves his reader to form his own judgment from the clear and accurate statement of facts, which he presents to his mind,

Useless however will prove his labour, and ineffectual his skill, in tracing events and actions to their causes, or in preserving due order and connexion in his work, unless he can inspire his writings with animation, and excite the interest of his readers. For this most important purpose he displays the soundness of his judgment, the boldness of his genius, and the correctness of his taste. He is cautious in his choice of such circumstances as will please and strike the mind; and, like a skilful poet or painter, he studies the effect of selection, combination, and contrast. He perceives that by this road the ancient historians were led to fame; he imitates their powers of lively description, and, as often as a proper opportunity will admit, paints the scene of action with a rapid pencil dipped in the most glowing colours, delineates the lively portraits of the actors, and charms the imagination, and excites the sympathy of every judicious reader,

^m Tacit. Hist. lib. i. c. 1.

In short, the accomplished historian is awake to the interests of virtue, and is influenced by sensibility, and warmed by a proper regard for liberty, and the happiness of mankind. These principles give energy to his conceptions, and perseverance to his industry. He is best qualified to write with true dignity, when he has worked up his mind to a just elevation of thought, by reflecting, that it is his noble and important office to address himself to all polished nations through the succeeding ages of the world. And he will be kept steady to the cause of justice, when he considers himself as an impartial witness, who is bound by his duty to stand before the tribunal of posterity, and is there liable to be arraigned for every offence, against the majesty of truthⁿ.

By these laws, which may be considered as some of the principal rules of history, every historian may be tried. They furnish an equal standard to

ⁿ Μορὴ δυντεὸν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ τις ἱστορίαν γραψὼν τοι, τῶν δὲ ἀλλῶν ἀπαντῶν ἀμελητέον αὐτῷ· καὶ ὅλως πεχὺς εἰς καὶ μετρον ἀκριβές, ἀποβλεπεῖν μὴ εἰς τῆς νυν ἀκρόντας, ἀλλ' εἰς τῆς μετὰ ταῦτα συνεσομένης τοῖς συγγραμμασί. Lucian, v. ii. p. 53. edit. Hemsterhus.

Many of the requisites which Lucian in this too much neglected Treatise on the Manner of writing History, esteems necessary to constitute a good historian, are touched upon with great judgment and spirit. There are some judicious remarks on this subject by the Marquis d'Argenson, who frankly confesses the failure of the French in this noble branch of composition. Choix de Memoires de l'Academie, tom. iii. p. 627. See Hayley's Essay on History, and particularly his Notes; and Cicero de Oratore, lib. ii. sect. 62, 63.

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direct the writer, and determine the judgment of the reader.

It is the duty of fair criticism to estimate the merits of writers at their just value. If therefore we seek for those historians who approach nearest to this standard, by excelling in that particular department which each has undertaken, we ought to select from the Greek writers, THUCYDIDES and POLYBIUS; from the Latin, LIVY and TACITUS; and from those of Great Britain, CLARENDON, ROBERTSON, and HENRY. Their excellent productions are marked by strong and lively description, energy of thought, love of virtue, and zeal for truth;—and their refined talents for political speculation were exercised with a view to the welfare of their own countries, and the general improvement of mankind.

CHAPTER III.

Geography.

GEOGRAPHY and **Chronology** are, with the greatest propriety, called the eyes of history, because this metaphor, expresses, better than any other, how effectually they assist us in taking a full and comprehensive view of every transaction.

Geography gives a description of the globe, as consisting of land and water. The land is divided into **Continents**, **Islands**, **Peninsulas**, **Isthmuses**, **Capes**, and **Promontories**. The water is divided into **Oceans**, **Seas**, **Gulphs**, **Bays**, **Lakes**, and **Rivers**.

A *Continent* is a large portion of land which includes several regions or kingdoms, not separated from each other by seas; as Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. An *Island* is a portion of land surrounded by the sea, as Britain, Ireland, Jamaica, &c. A *Peninsula* is a portion of land almost surrounded by the sea, and joined to the main land by an *Isthmus*, as the Morea in the Mediterranean sea, joined to Greece by the Isthmus of Corinth. An *Isthmus* is a narrow neck of land, which joins a peninsula to a **Continent**, as the Isthmus of Suez, which joins Africa to Europe, and the Isthmus of Darien, which

which unites North to South America. A *Promontory* is a high mountain which projects into the sea; the extreme point of it is called a Cape, as the Cape of Good Hope, and Cape Horn.

An *Ocean* is a vast body of salt water, which is bounded by some of the largest divisions of the earth. There are three oceans, the Atlantic, the Indian, and the Pacific. A *Sea* is a body of salt water communicating with an ocean by means of a strait, as the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the Euxine, the Caspian, and the Red Sea. A *Gulph* is a part of an ocean, or sea, which runs far into the land, as the Gulph of Persia and of Mexico. A *Bay* is an inlet of the sea between two capes, not so narrow, in proportion to its length, as a gulph, and approaching in shape, to a greater or smaller segment of a circle. Such is the Bay of Biscay, of Naples, and Dublin. A *Lake* is a body of water usually fresh, completely surrounded by land, except where rivers run in or out of it, as Keswick Lake, in Cumberland, the Lake of Geneva, &c. A *River* is a body of water rising from fountains, or sources inland, and flowing into a lake, the sea, or the ocean, as the Thames, the Orinoco, &c.

Geography teaches likewise the divisions of the artificial globe. An artificial globe is a round body or sphere, the surface of which is in every part equally remote from the centre, and on which the external form of the world is represented, and
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all parts of the earth and sea described in their natural form, order, distance, and situation. The chief points and circles on the terrestrial globe are the axis, the poles, the equator, the meridians, the zodiac, or ecliptic, the tropics, the polar circles, and the horizon.

The *axis* is a straight line passing through the centre, upon which the globe is supposed to turn. The *poles* are the two extreme points of the axis, diametrically opposite to each other, the one called the north, the other the south pole. The *equator* divides the globe into two equal parts, called the northern and southern hemispheres. The equator is likewise called the equinoctial line, because when the sun is in this circle, the days and nights are equal to all the inhabitants of the earth. The *meridians* are circles that pass from one pole to the other, and cut the equator at right angles. Places situated under different meridians, are said to differ in longitude. Circles drawn parallel to the equator, and consequently crossing the meridian at right angles, are called parallels of latitude. When the meridian lines are 24 in number, they are 15 degrees, or one hour, distant from each other; those who live under the meridian line on the right hand, have the sun an hour before us, and those who live under the meridian line on the left have the sun an hour after us; and this shows what is meant by eastern and western longitude. As *longitude* is the distance of any place east or west of the first meridian, so *latitude* is the distance of

of a place north or south from the equator. If it be north of the equator, it is called north latitude; if south, it is called south latitude.

The *Tropics* are two circles parallel to the equator, the one on the north called the tropic of cancer, the other on the south called the tropic of capricorn; they are each at the distance of $23^{\circ} 30'$ from the equator. The *polar circles* are two circles at $23^{\circ} 10'$ distance from the north and south poles; parallel to the equator, and at the distance of $66^{\circ} 30'$ each from it. The northern circle is called the arctic, and the southern the antarctic. The *ecliptic*, or zodiac, is a great circle dividing the globe into two equal parts, and cutting the equator, or equinoctial, in two opposite points. It touches each of the tropics, and makes an angle with the equator of $23^{\circ} 30'$. It marks the apparent annual path of the sun; when the sun approaches one of the tropics, he seems to be stationary for a few days, and then gradually recedes towards the other; hence they are called the summer and winter solstices. The circle seen on a clear day, when the sky and water, or earth, seem to meet, is called the *visible horizon*; parallel to which, at the earth's semidiameter, is the true and *rational horizon*.

By means of the circles already described, the position of any place whose actual situation has been ascertained, can easily be assigned to it upon the artificial globe; and vice versa, by the same means,

means, if the position of any place be exactly found upon a globe, on which the surface of the earth is already delineated, the place itself can also be found. A knowledge of these principles is necessary, before the geographical student proceeds to the solution of a variety of entertaining problems upon the artificial globe.

The **WORLD** is divided into the four quarters of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, more from regard to established custom, than with reference to an equal separation of its parts.

The population of the globe is computed at **953** millions. In Russia there are 17 inhabitants to each square mile; in Italy, 170; and in the Netherlands, 275. This great disproportion arises from the difference with respect to climate, agriculture, and commerce.

EUROPE, the most eminent part of the globe with respect to literature, arts, sciences, and commerce, is by far the least in point of extent. It is about 3000 miles long, 2500 broad, and its area, according to Templeman's survey, is 258,000 miles.

It lies almost entirely in the northern temperate zone; a small part of it at the northern extremity is extended beyond the arctic circle, but it does not approach nearer to the equator than $35\frac{1}{2}$ degrees. On the east and south-east, it is bounded by

by Asia; on the west, north-west, and south-west, by the Atlantic Ocean; and on the south, by the Mediterranean sea. The number of inhabitants is computed to amount to 153 millions. It is the most populous of all the quarters of the globe, in proportion to its size, and enjoys the most uniform temperature of climate; the soil is well adapted to tillage, or pasturage, yields a copious supply of the necessaries of life, and its mines produce the most useful metals. The character of the Europeans seems to partake the advantages of the climate, and is remarkable, particularly in the more northern parts, for the ingenuity, industry, and enterprising temper of the natives. The manufactures, particularly of the English and French, are conveyed to the most remote countries, and are found to contribute to the comfort of all nations. Owing to the influence of a mild and benevolent religion, the horrors of war are softened, and from the prevalence of commerce, a more general and more amicable intercourse is carried on than in any other part of the globe.

The principal divisions of Europe are as follow: England, Scotland, and Ireland, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, the Austrian Netherlands, the United Provinces, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Transylvania, Sclavonia, Croatia, Turkey in Europe, Poland, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The independent states are the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, France, Russia, the larger part of Germany, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark and Norway. All the other countries are either
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so much oppressed by the tyranny or influenced by the councils of the French government, that no observation can be made which it is hoped will continue applicable to their political condition.

The British dominions formerly included several provinces in France. They now comprehend England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, the Isles of Wight, Scilly, Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark; Gibraltar in Spain—Malta in the Mediterranean Sea—Jamaica, Barbadoes, St. Christopher's, Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat, Dominica, Martinico, St. Vincent, Grenada, &c. &c. in the West Indies.—The Island of St. Helena, settlements upon the coast of Africa, and extensive territories in the East Indies—The provinces of Nova Scotia, Canada, and New Britain in North America; as well as Newfoundland, Cape Breton, St. John's, the Bermudas or Somers Islands, and the Lucayos or Bahama Isles upon the coast of North America. To these may be added the settlement of Botany Bay upon the coast of New Holland, and Norfolk Island in the South Pacific Ocean.

The extent of England is 320 miles from north to south, that is, from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Isle of Wight, and 285 miles from east to west, that is, from the South Foreland, in Kent, to the Land's End, in Cornwall. It contains 40 counties, and 9,343,578 inhabitants, according to the latest computation.

London is the most noble and most opulent city in Europe, perhaps in the world. Including Westminster and the Borough of Southwark, it contains 885,577 inhabitants. The river Thames, crossed by three magnificent bridges, is constantly crowded below London bridge by masts of ships, which have the appearance of an extensive forest. Vessels wafted on its ample stream convey to the metropolis the choicest productions of all the countries of the globe.

Wales, divided into north and south, is 130 miles long and 87 broad. It contains 12 counties, and about 300,000 inhabitants.

Scotland, exclusive of its numerous islands, is 270 miles long, from the Mull of Galloway, in the south, to Cape Wrath, in the north; and 140 miles from east to west, in the broadest part. It contains 13 shires north, and 18 shires south of the river Tay, and about one million and a half of inhabitants.

Edinburgh, its capital, has been of late years so much improved, as to rival London in the elegance of some of its streets; including the harbour of Leith, it contains 84,886 inhabitants.

Ireland is 285 miles from north to south, and 180 from east to west, in the broadest part. It is divided into four provinces, and 32 counties, and contains about four millions of inhabitants.

Dublin,

Dublin, its capital, contains 150,000 inhabitants. The harbour of Dublin is incommodious, as it is obstructed by two banks of sand; but the prospect which it presents, with the surrounding scenery, is so beautiful as to admit of a comparison with the Bay of Naples.

England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, constituting the United kingdom of England and Ireland, are represented in the Imperial Parliament by the following proportions of members: England and Wales send 513 members, Scotland 45, Ireland 100; making the House of Commons amount in all, to 658. Scotland sends twelve Peers to the House of Lords; and Ireland thirty-two, but the English Peers, who are members of that house, are unlimited.

ASIA has been renowned in history from the beginning of time. There the all-wise Creator planted the Garden of Eden, and placed in it the first parents of the human race. After the deluge it became again the nursery of the world. There the sons of Noah dwelt, and colonies went forth to people the globe; there the Redeemer of mankind appeared, to preach the gospel of life and immortality. In Asia, the ancient monarchies of Assyria and of Persia were erected. It is much larger than either Europe or Africa; it is about 4,800 miles in length, and 4,300 in breadth, and contains an area of 8 millions of miles. Except China, and the greater part of Hindoostan, it is thinly inhabited. The population

lation is computed to amount to five hundred millions. The soil is rich, and it produces corn in the greatest abundance, the most delicious fruits, plants, drugs, and gums, and in its mines are found diamonds, gold, silver, copper, and iron. The difference of climate, manners, and productions, is so strongly marked, that they cannot be included under one description. No objects which it presents are more interesting to us than the Chinese Empire, and the British territories in Hindoostan.

China. This country, exclusive of Chinese Tartary, is about 2000 miles in length, and 1600 in breadth. It is divided into 16 Provinces, the total population of which is said to be 333 millions of souls. This amount was delivered to Lord Macartney, at his particular request, by Chow ta Zhin, a Chinese Mandarin, and is founded on authentic documents, taken from one of the public offices at Peking. Peking, the metropolis, contains three millions of inhabitants. China is bounded on the north by Chinese Tartary; on the south, by the sea of China; on the east, by the Pacific Ocean; and on the west, by great Thibet, and Tonkin. The Chinese are remarkable for the early period at which they were civilized, and had made some progress in the arts and sciences. But they appear to have been stationary for a considerable time; and from their having made no improvements, they seem to be incapable of doing so; and it may therefore be presumed, that they received their arts from some other people, probably the Hindoos of India. Their

Their language seems to exclude the possibility of improvement in speculative researches, from the difficulty of expressing abstract ideas in it. Of astronomy they know little, and cannot calculate eclipses. Their knowledge of medicine is slight, and is blended with superstition. They are said to have been acquainted with gunpowder from an early period, but they never employed it in artillery or fire arms, till instructed by the Europeans. They claim the invention of printing at a remote age; yet they are ignorant of the use of moveable types, and print from blocks of wood. Their mode of painting is a mere mechanical imitation, without grace or expression. They have no idea of the rules of perspective; and in sculpture, the figures of their idols show the pleasure they take in deformity and disproportion.

Yet we must allow, that in some arts they have reached a great degree of excellence. Every spot in China is highly cultivated; the Emperor glories in being the first husbandman in his dominions, and annually directs the plough with his own hands. The whole surface of the country presents the appearance of a garden, and is appropriated to the production of food for man. Their husbandry is singularly neat, and in their fields, whatever is the produce, scarcely a weed is to be seen. The great attention to agriculture, which extended to the whole empire, may account for the sustenance of so large a population as that of the Chinese. Their embellishments of rural nature have never been done justice to by the imitations of Europeans.

The manufacture of porcelain is an original invention of their own; and although we surpass them in the ornamental parts of china, we cannot reach the excellence of their material. Their canals are the largest and finest in the world, extending sometimes more than 1000 miles, and deep enough to float large vessels. Their greatest monument of antiquity is the wall of China, built by Tsin Chi-Hoang, 221 years before Christ, to separate China from Tartary, and defend it from a more warlike people. It is carried across mountains and vallies for 1500 miles, is from 20 to 25 feet high, and is strengthened by various forts. The top, which is wide enough for six horsemen to travel abreast, is terraced, and cased with brick.

To the Chinese we are indebted for a species of beverage the most agreeable and salubrious. The tea shrub is distinguished into four sorts, Song-lo-tcha, Vou-y-tcha, Pou-eul-tcha, and a species which grows wild. The manner of cultivating the tea shrubs is this:—the Chinese plant them in rows, after which they are pruned, to prevent their growing too high; the natural height of the first being ten feet; in four or five years they are replanted, which prevents the leaf from growing thick, hard, and tough. The flowers are white, composed of five petals, and shaped like a rose; they are succeeded by berries, in the form of a nut, partaking of the taste of the leaf. The leaves of the second sort are short, and round at the top. Of this shrub the inhabitants make three pickings; first, the tender leaf when it appears;—this
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is seldom exposed to sale, but is sent as a present to the Emperor, and other great persons;—secondly, when the leaves are of a middling size; and thirdly, when they are full grown. The third species differs from the two former, being a bushy shrub; the decoction made from its leaves is esteemed exceedingly salutary by the inhabitants. The fourth sort is little inferior to the other three, though produced without culture; but the Chinese, from interested motives, always condemn it.

The Chinese are indefatigable in the culture of rice, with which they are chiefly fed; and of cotton, with which they are clothed. The cotton shrub rises about two feet in height, and bears a yellow flower, sometimes tinged with red; this is succeeded by a pod, which, when opened, contains three or four bags in the form of a silk-worm's covering, filled with very white cotton^a.

Before the conquest of China by the Tartars, their government was patriarchal. Duty to the father of each family was enforced, under the most rigorous penalties; and the Emperor was considered as the father of his people. The Mandarins, or great officers of state, were acknowledged as his substitutes. Degrees of submission from an inferior to a superior, are observed with the greatest formality; at present they are governed by their antient laws, and others imposed upon

^a Vye's Geography, p. 357, &c.

them by the Tartars. They have no established religion; the Emperor is of one, the mandarins of another, and the common people of a third, which is that of the God Fo. They are very superstitious, crafty, and dishonest; and the fact seems to be too well established to admit of a doubt, that they destroy great numbers of their infant children. They have no pretensions to the very high antiquity to which they lay claim, yet still if we consider their immense numbers, their industry, their early promotion of the arts, and their systematic and well regulated government, they must be allowed to be a very extraordinary people.

Hindooستان, or the Empire of the Great Mogul, includes the peninsula within the Ganges; it is bounded by Persia and the Arabian sea on the west, by West Tartary and Great Tibet on the north and north-east, by the kingdom of Ava and the bay of Bengal on the east, and by the great Indian ocean on the south. The length of this country, from Cape Comorin on the south, to the frontiers of West Tartary on the north, is nearly 2000 miles; and its breadth, in its widest extent, from Persia to the kingdom of Ava, is near 1500 miles. Hindooستان is at present divided into a great number of states; the chief of them are tributary to the British nation, which possesses the whole province of Bengal, Bahar, part of Orissa, and the district of Benares in Oude; Madras, on the coast of Coromandel, the Circars, a long tract on the same coast; on the western coasts, the Islands of Bombay and Salfette, and in the Myfore country,

country, the Province of Canara, the districts of Coimbatoor and Daraporam, the forts forming the heads of all the passes above the Ghauts on the Table land, and Seringapatam, with the neighbouring territory.

The country of India in general is rich in mines, which produce gold, diamonds, rubies, topazes, amethysts, &c. The soil is fruitful in wheat, rice, and pepper. The principal fruit trees are the cocoa, palm, tamarind, guava, mango, plantain, orange, lemon, pomegranate, and the most delicious pine-apples, and melons. The woods abound in lions, tigers, and buffaloes, and all places are greatly infested with serpents, scorpions, musketoos, and locusts. The chief articles of commerce exported by the company from their settlements, and from China, are porcelain, Bengal and China silk, tea, quicksilver, canes, pepper, calicoes, muslins, nankeens, chintzes, rhubarb, and various other drugs, and filligree work in gold, silver, and ivory.

The territories which belong to the English East India Company, present the singular political phenomenon of a rich, fertile, and populous tract of country, larger than the United Kingdom of England and Ireland; situated at a distance of half the circumference of the globe from England, and governed by a chartered company of merchants in London, under the direction of the Board of Controul. These merchants, although the seat of government

ment is so remote, and they are frequently at war with the native Princes of India, continue, under the auspices of their parent state, to extend their dominions and increase the various branches of their commerce.

AFRICA is separated from Europe by the Mediterranean sea, and is united to Asia by the Isthmus of Suez. It is much larger than Europe, but less than either Asia or America. It is not broken, like Europe and the south of Asia, into several irregular tracts of land by the interposition of the sea, but has the appearance of a uniform and vast peninsula. The once populous and commercial coast of the Mediterranean, formerly the seat of the powerful empire of Carthage, now contains only the small piratical states of Barbary. A very large portion of Africa lies between the Tropics, and is exposed to excessive heat. This is the part which produces most gold and aromatic drugs, and where Lions, Tigers, and Elephants abound. The inhabitants are either tawny Moors, or Negroes of different shades and features. The interior of Africa is no otherwise known, than from the accounts of a few travellers, or the vague reports of the tribes that live near the coasts. On surveying these sultry and inhospitable regions, the mind feels repose and satisfaction to remark the British settlements of Sierra Leone, and Bulama, established for the purpose of raising the productions of the West Indies, without the aid of Slaves.

Egypt,

Egypt, lately recalled to our notice as the scene of British naval and military glory, was the first civilized country in the world. Hence of old beamed the light of science and arts; and there still remain, in defiance of the ravages of time, the stupendous pyramids, the most antient monuments of human labour and magnificence extant. Mummies, preserved from remote times, hieroglyphics engraved upon pillars and sarcophagi, and curious obelisks still exist as memorials of the skill and ingenuity of the antient Egyptians. The present inhabitants, slothful, ignorant, and unwarlike, the complete reverse of their remote ancestors, remain in that degraded and enslaved state predicted by the Jewish Prophets. Egypt is about 600 miles in length, and 250 in breadth; bounded on the north by the Mediterranean sea. on the south by Abyssinia, on the east by the Red Sea, and on the west by the deserts of Lybia. The principal towns of lower Egypt are Grand Cairo, Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta; and of upper Egypt, Sayd or Thebes, and Cossier. The Nile has its source in the mountains of Abyssinia; pursues its progress through Nubia into Egypt, which it divides into two parts, and empties itself by seven mouths into the Mediterranean, after a progress of 1500 miles. Increased by the torrents of rain which fall in Abyssinia, it overflows its banks every year, and gradually rises from May to September. When the river subsides, the mud left behind is so rich, that the husbandmen are frequently obliged to temper it with sand, lest the corn should grow too rank. Of the productions suitable to the climate, they have three
crop

crops in a year ; the first of lettuces and cucumbers, the second of corn, and the third of melons. Here the plague rages once in six or seven years ; but it abates when the Nile rises. Almost every species of noxious animal is to be found in Egypt, particularly the Tiger, the Hyena, and the Crocodile. The sultry wind conveys from the parched deserts those clouds of sand which cause the Ophthalmia, a disorder found highly injurious to our army, in their late glorious campaign.

AMERICA, or the New World, is between eight and nine thousand miles in length, and, in some parts, nearly 3690 miles in breadth ; it enjoys all the variety of climates, and occupies a considerable part of both hemispheres, and is not much inferior in dimensions to a third part of the habitable globe. The eastern shores are washed by the Atlantic and Southern Oceans, and the western by the Pacific Ocean. It consists of two great continents, distinguished by the names of North and South America. These are connected by the isthmus of Darien, nearly 360 miles in length, but not more than 16 miles broad in the narrowest part. In the gulph bounded by the northern and southern continents, lie numerous islands, which are called the West Indies, to distinguish them from the countries on the eastern coasts of Asia, which are called the East Indies.

In America, the works of creation are formed upon a scale of magnificence unknown to us in the eastern

eastern hemisphere. The river St. Laurence to the north, which receives the Missouri, the Illinois, and the Ohio in its course; and the Mississippi to the south, in North America;—the Maragnon, the Oronoco, the Plata, and Amazon, in South America, roll their waters in such spacious channels as to resemble arms of the sea. The lakes, Ontario, Erie, Huron, Michigan, and Superior, the boundaries of the United States in North America, form inland seas of fresh and transparent water, and are navigable for ships of any burthen. The mountains from which these rivers rise, are far superior in height to those in the other divisions of the globe. The Andes, forming a stupendous ridge, extend 5000 miles, and rise in different places more than one third above the Pike of Teneriffe, which is three miles above the level of the sea, and is the highest land in the antient hemisphere. Their heads are concealed in the clouds, the storms roll, and the thunders burst, far below their summits, which, although exposed to the rays of the sun in the midst of the torrid zone, are covered with perpetual snows*. In this superiority in the appearances of nature, neither man nor the inferior animals partake. The American natives were found to be savage, indolent, cruel, and remarkably deficient in the powers of the mind. America, both North

* Robertson's History of America. Comparative heights of mountains according to different authors. Skiddaw, 3000 feet above the level of the sea; Snowden, in North Wales, 3,568 feet; Ben Nevis, in Scotland, 4,387 feet; Mount Gemmi, in the Canton of Berne, 10,110 feet; Pike of Teneriffe, 13,178 feet; Chimborazo, the highest of the Andes, 20,280 feet.

and South, derives its whole importance from its colonies of European origin; and North America is distinguished by the recent formation of some of the English colonies into an independent republic of United States, preserving the language and the customs of the mother country, and containing, according to the last census, six millions of inhabitants. The degree to which a population, which with the assistance of emigrants is said to be doubled in twenty years, possessing ample territory for its subsistence may extend, is not easy to be ascertained; but should the ravages of the yellow fever subside, the American states may go on to increase their inhabitants in a manner equal to any country hitherto known in the world.

North America is divided into the provinces of Nova Scotia, Canada, and New Britain, belonging to Great Britain; the sixteen United States, Louisiana, lately purchased by them of the French; East and West Florida, California, and Mexico, or New Spain, belonging to Spain. The immense inland country, much of which is unexplored, is still occupied in many parts by the Indian tribes.

The Colonies of South America, still more extensive, remain in the possession of their parent countries of Spain and Portugal, while these states, notwithstanding the vast revenues which they derive from their colonies, have been long sinking in the scale of European importance. South America is divided

divided into seven great provinces, Terra Firma, Peru, Amazonia, Brazil, Paraguay, Chili, and Patagonia. Peru, the richest province of America, situated on the southern coast, is about 1400 miles long, and 400 broad. Its chief commodities are gold and silver, quicksilver, pearls, cotton, tobacco, cochineal, and drugs; quinquina or the Jesuits' bark, the virtue of which is well known all over Europe, and tobacco of the finest flavour, are peculiar to this country. The climate of Brazil is temperate, and the soil fertile; its chief commodities are gold, diamonds, red wood, sugar, amber, &c. It is subject to the King of Portugal, who draws great riches from it.

The foregoing is a very imperfect account of the terraqueous globe we inhabit. It is so large in dimensions, that even Teneriffe or Mont Blanc are, compared to it, but as grains of dust, upon an artificial sphere. Its diameter is 7970 miles, and its surface contains 199,557,259 square miles. Placed between the Orbits of Venus and Mars, it performs its course around the Sun at the rate of 68243 miles in an hour, and completes its annual revolution in rather more than 365 days.

Without a knowledge of Geography, no reader can have a clear idea of the scene, where any occurrence takes place; but is liable to the grossest mistakes by confounding one part of the world with another. It is equally applicable to modern as to ancient history, and introduces the pleasing combination

bination of the antient and modern names of places, and the characters and manners of the different inhabitants. It assists the memory by the associations of ideas, which it suggests; and the prospect of a country represented by a map, or a globe, recalls to mind the memorable deeds which have been performed in it, as well as its illustrious men.

Persons in various situations of life are interested in the study of geography, and may reap advantage from its cultivation. While it constitutes a branch of knowledge essentially necessary for the traveller, the merchant, and the sailor, it furnishes abundant stores of investigation to the naturalist and the philosopher. It is not only requisite for every reader of history, but for every one who peruses the daily accounts of the events which are taking place in various parts of the world, whether they are the seats of war or of commerce. It has long been considered as a material branch of a polite education; at present indeed it is more particularly requisite that it should be so, as the British commerce and colonies extend our connexions to so many different countries; and as many voyages of discovery have of late years been made.

Chronology furnishes the standard by which the succession of time is measured. By its assistance we can calculate the rise and fall of empires, the length of lives, and the dates of all remarkable occurrences. It includes eras and epochs. These signify

signify the time when any memorable event takes place, as the Christian era means the birth of Christ.

Different nations have adopted different modes of computing time. The most antient we read of is that of Moses. In his description of the deluge he calculates by months, consisting each of thirty days, and by years, consisting of 360 days each^p. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians reckoned in the same manner, and from them probably Moses adopted his method, as he was versed in all their learning.

^p This is asserted in general terms in Doddsley's Preceptor, and the proof may be satisfactorily made out in the following manner, by which the particular details of scripture, relative to the deluge, in Genesis, chap. vii. will be made exactly to amount to the sum total in Genesis, chap. viii. v. 13.

2 Months 17 Days. The time when the fountains of the deep were dried up.

40 Days. Continuation of rain.

40..... Increase of the deluge.

150..... Its continuation.

40..... Its decrease.

7..... The dove sent from the ark the first time.

7..... The dove sent out the second time.

301 Days divided by 30=10 Months 1 Day.

Add the 2 Months 2

12 Months 1 Day.

That is, *the first month in the first day of the month*, as stated in chap. viii. v. 13, *when the face of the ground was dry*, and the waters had intirely subsided.

The Greeks calculated by Olympiads. An *Olympiad* is a space of four years, after the expiration of which, that is in the fifth year, games in honour of Jupiter Olympius were celebrated with great pomp and festivity by the Greeks near Olympia, a city in Peloponnesus. They were fully established in the 3228th year of the world, 776 before Christ. This mode of computation appears to have ceased after the 364th, which ended A.D. 440, as we have no further mention of them in history.

The usual mode of Roman computation was from the years which had elapsed from the building of the City, *anno urbis conditæ*, expressed briefly by the letters A.U.C. This event took place in the 3252d year of the world, and the 752d year before Christ.

The ordinary mode of reckoning the years of the world is to take 4004 before Christ for the era of the creation, which is adopted from the Hebrew text of the Scriptures. Christians compute from the most memorable of all eras, the birth of our Saviour, which happened in the 27th year of the reign of Augustus, and in the year of Rome 749. The Turks compute from the *Hegira*, or flight of Mahomet from Mecca; this happened in the 622d year of our Lord, when Heraclius was Emperor of the East. The Julian, or old stile, is so called from Julius Cæsar, who regulated the Roman Calendar. He added a day immediately after the twenty-

twenty-fourth of February, called by the Romans the sixth of the Calends of March; as it was thus reckoned *twice*, the year in which it was introduced was called *Bissextile*, or what we call Leap Year.

This Calendar was still more reformed by order of Pope Gregory XIII. in 1582, from whence arose the New Style, which is now observed in every European country, except Russia. The Julian year was too long by nearly eleven minutes, which excess amounts to about three days in 400 years: the Pope therefore, with the advice of able astronomers, ordained that a day in every three centuries out of four should be omitted; so that every century, which would otherwise be a bissextile year, is made to be only a common year, excepting only such centuries as are exactly divisible by four, which happens once in four centuries. This reformation of the Calendar commenced in the countries under the papal influence on the 4th of October, 1582, when ten days were omitted at once, which had been overrun since the Council of Nice in 325, by the overplus of eleven minutes each year. In England this New Style commenced only in 1752, when eleven days were omitted at once, the 3d of September being reckoned the 14th in that year; as the surplus minutes had then amounted to eleven days. The Calendar thus reformed, which, by an Act of Parliament in the 24th of George II. was ordered to be observed, comes very nearly to the accuracy of nature,

nature, for it is ordered by that Act, that Easter Sunday, on which the rest of the Feasts depend, is always the first Sunday after the full moon, which happens upon, or next after the 21st of March; and if the full moon happens on a Sunday, Easter-day is the Sunday after⁹.

⁹ This account is taken from Hutton's Mathematical Dictionary.

CHAPTER IV.

The History of the Jews.

THE Israelites, or ancient Jews, were those distinguished people, who were favoured by the immediate care of the Almighty, and conducted by his especial guidance to Judea, a place of residence promised to their remote ancestors. In consequence of their obstinacy, idolatry, and wickedness, and more particularly for the rejection of their Messiah, they were subdued by the Romans, after sustaining a siege in their metropolis, unparalleled in the annals of history for its distresses, calamities, and slaughter. Jerusalem was reduced to ruins, the Jewish government was totally subverted, and the surviving people were dispersed over most parts of the world. Their descendants still remain unmixed with the rest of mankind, and are marked by their original features of national peculiarity: they adhere with the most zealous attachment to the religion of their forefathers, and cherish the hopes of restoration to their former prosperity by means of a glorious and triumphant Deliverer^r.

^r Many of the materials for this chapter were furnished by the works of Josephus, Stillingfleet's *Origines sacrae*, Bryant's *Mythology*, Gray's *Key to the Old Testament*, Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, &c.

They preserve with the most watchful care the sacred Books of their ancient writers. And astonishing, *very astonishing it is to observe, that in the prophetical parts of these sacred Books are contained all the events before mentioned of their extraordinary history.* Their particular conduct, and the vicissitudes of their national affairs, were predicted by their prophets, and more especially by Moses, their great lawgiver, in the infancy of the world, at the vast distance of thirty-three centuries from the present times. The accomplishment of these predictions bears the fullest and most striking evidence to the truth and inspiration of their Prophets, and illustrates the dispensations of Providence to his chosen people.

These sacred Books contain likewise prophecies the most exact of the character, office, and actions of the Messiah of the Jews, the great lawgiver of the Christians, the appointed Saviour of the world.

Such interesting circumstances as these, in addition to the peculiar nature of the Jewish polity, considered as a divine institution, the curious manners and customs, and the memorable actions of the descendants of Abraham, viz. of the most ancient people of whom we have any authentic accounts, combine to place these Books first in order of importance, as in order of time.

If

If we consider, I. The great *antiquity* of these Books; II. The *proofs* which support their authenticity; III. *Their subjects, the characters of the writers*, and the place they occupy in the order of general history, particularly as they stand connected with the Christian Revelation, they will be found to deserve our very earnest attention.

I. *The Antiquity of the Scriptures.*

No writings of any other nation can be brought into competition in this respect, with those of the Jews. In proof of this assertion, it may be remarked, that Moses lived more than a thousand years before the age of Herodotus, who is reputed the father of Grecian history; and rather earlier than he flourished, Ezra and Nehemiah closed the records of the Jews'. As another proof of the priority of the Jews to the Greeks, it appears by the confession of the Greek writers themselves that they received the letters of their alphabet from the Phenicians; and there are very sufficient grounds for believing, that the Phenicians derived the art of writing from the Jews. The learned and acute Porphyry, who was an equal enemy both to Jews and Christians, and much attached to the learning of Greece, candidly confessed, that Moses, and

^s Moses - - - - - B.C. 1571 years.

Herodotus - - - - - 445

The former therefore preceded the latter 1126

Nehemiah lived - - - - - B.C. 456

the Prophets who immediately succeeded him, flourished nearly a thousand years before any of the Greek philosophers.

The Books, which compose the Canon of the Jewish Scriptures, have the concurrence of all antiquity in favour of their originality. They were delivered to the Hebrews in their own language, with every mark of genuineness, by the persons, whose names they bear; and these persons, by recording contemporary events, constantly appealed to well-known proofs of their regard to truth. The prophetic Books in particular contain the evidences of their inspiration, as well as of the integrity and piety of their authors. The external proofs are clear and strong, as well as the internal; in consequence of which all these Books have always been preserved with the greatest care, and have been held in the highest veneration.

It is no less curious than important to remark the traditions preserved in the Pagan world, which confirm the truth of the Pentateuch, or the five books written by Moses. The tenet of Thales, the great philosopher of Miletus, that water was the first element; the doctrine of Pythagoras, that the universe was created from a shapeless mass of matter; the opinions, that the world was formed by an almighty Power, who gave to man the dominion over the inferior animals; and that man in his primeval state was innocent and happy, may be traced back to the earliest times. Many other
parts

parts of Grecian mythology, as well as the traditions prevalent among the various nations of the earth, and particularly among the inhabitants of the vast continent of Asia, agree with the Mosaical account of the creation. Noah, the ark, and the dove, are circumstances of tradition in almost all parts of the world, and the Flood is the epoch from which is dated the origin of all records¹.

The beginning of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* reads very much like a free poetical version of the first chapters of the Book of Genesis, adapted to the taste of the Romans. Ovid describes the creation of the world by an almighty power out of a rude and unorganised mass, called chaos, that is, the *earth without form and void* of Moses. Ovid describes the superiority given to man over all other animals, and his innocent and happy state in the golden age, when the earth brought forth spontaneously the most delicious fruits for his subsistence; what is this but Adam in the garden of Eden? When the race of men became depraved and sinful, the Supreme Being destroyed them by a deluge with the exception only of one guiltless pair, Deucalion and Pyrrha. They are preserved upon a mountain; allusive to that where the ark of Noah rested after the flood. The effort of the

¹ Cicero thus represents the opinion of Thales. "Aquam esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret." Cicero de Nat. Deorum, l. i. c. xxv. This comes very close to the Mosaic account: *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* Gen. i.

giants to scale the heavens, is evidently a story founded upon the attempt to build the tower of Babel. Many other resemblances might be pointed out, but these may be sufficient to prove the source from which the descriptions of the Poet must have been originally derived.

The Chaldeans preserved the history of their Xisurus, who was the Noah of Moses. The Egyptians asserted, that Mercury had engraved his doctrine upon columns, which had resisted the violence of a deluge. The Chinese historians record, that Peyrun, a mortal beloved and protected by the Gods, saved himself in a vessel from the general inundation. The Hindoos say that the waters of the ocean spread over the surface of the whole earth, except one mountain to the north—that one woman with seven men saved themselves on this mountain with certain plants and animals. They add, in speaking of their God Vishnou, that at the deluge he transformed himself into a fish, and conducted the vessel which preserved the relics of the human race. This vessel is likewise a subject of tradition in the northern parts of the world.

That the sacrifice of animals was necessary to appease the offended gods, was a religious tenet very general and very antient. The account of the long lives of the Patriarchs is confirmed by writers of various countries. Their primitive manners, and their mode of performing sacrifices, and offering prayers to the great Author of nature on the

the summits of mountains, and in the retirements of groves, agree with the descriptions of Homer, and many other early writers. Zoroaster, the great teacher of the ancient Persians, derived from the Books of Moses the first principles of his religion, his ceremonial laws, his account of the creation, of the first parents of mankind, of the Patriarchs, and particularly of Abraham, whose pure religion he professed to restore.

In the attributes and characters of the Heathen gods may be found allusions to the ancient expressions of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the customs, laws, and ceremonies of many other nations may be traced a resemblance to the Mosaical institutions. In the accounts of the deities of the Pagans, and the early heroes and benefactors of mankind, particularly in those which adorn the pages of Grecian history, are represented many of the Patriarchs and illustrious persons of Scripture. Many principles of the most eminent philosophers, many fictions of the most celebrated poets, both of Greece and Rome, and many institutions of the most renowned Heathen lawgivers, cannot fail, by their circumstances of resemblance, to direct our attention to the great Legislator of the Jews. The most venerable and ancient traditions of the world seem to contain the parts of one original and uniform system, which was broken by the dispersion of the primeval families after the deluge, and corrupted by the revolutions of ages. They were the streams, which flowed
through

through the various countries of the earth, from the great source of Mosaical history.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, flourished in the reign of the emperor Vespasian. He was a person of great learning and eminence, and conducted his inquiries with singular diligence, industry, and care. He corroborates the testimony of the sacred writers, and illustrates their truth; as he not only gives a regular detail of the most remarkable transactions of the Jews, but introduces considerable notices of all those people, with whom they formed alliances, or carried on wars. In his treatise against Apion, he exposes the contradictions, which occurred in the Egyptian, Chaldean, and Phenician records; vindicates the authority of the Jewish Scriptures; describes the care, which was taken in their preservation; and states their superior pretensions, more particularly in point of antiquity, to the respect and reverence of mankind.

II. *The Proofs of their authenticity.*

The support given by the earliest Heathen writers to the records of Scripture is very strong. The fragments of Sanchoniathon, the most ancient historian of Phenicia, who is supposed to have flourished not long after the death of Moses, confirm the Scriptural account of the origin of the world, and of many persons and places mentioned in the Pentateuch.

Pentateuch. Berofus the Chaldean, and Manetho the Egyptian, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, represented feveral circumstances conformably to the accounts given by **Mofes**^u. They wrote indeed about the time when the Old Testament was tranflated into Greek: but even taking it for granted, that they derived their accounts from the verſion of the Septuagint, their evidence is of no ſmall importance, as it ſhows the honour which was paid by the moſt learned perſons of the Eaſt to the ſacred records of the **Jews**; and that they looked upon them as the pureſt and the moſt authentic ſources of **hiſtory**.

The tranſactions and literature of the **Jews** were too remarkable to eſcape the attention of the learned and inquiſitive Pagans, when Judea became a province of the Roman empire. Many particulars relative to the eminent character of **Joſeph**, as a miniſter to Pharaoh, and as an inſpired prophet; to the emigration of the **Jews** from Egypt, their miraculous paſſage through the Red Sea, their ſettlement in the Holy Land, the inſtitutions and ceremonies of the Law, the ſplendour of Jeruſalem in its moſt flouriſhing times, the magnificence of the **Temple**, and the ſupreme, eternal, and immutable nature of the great object of their worſhip, are related by **Diodorus Siculus**, **Strabo**, **Pliny the Elder**, **Tacitus**, and **Juſtin**. Theſe eminent writers,

^u Berofus and Manetho, B. C. 270.

however

however erroneous in some particulars, are sufficiently correct in others; and however they may differ in some circumstances from each other, they agree in the great outlines of history. They show that the Jewish records were in their times thought worthy of high credit;—and that facts, well known in the world to be true and important, were faithfully related in those records.

The greatest care was taken of the books of the Old Testament in every period of the ancient church of the Jews. The original copies were deposited in the temple at Jerusalem, to serve for a sacred memorial to posterity. They were read in all the synagogues as long as the Jewish government remained; and the Jews themselves were so scrupulously observant of the strict purity and integrity of the sacred text, as to number every letter, and remark how often it occurred. They were accurately transcribed in every age, and translations were made into different languages; so that, as copies were multiplied, securities for the purity of the text increased; and forgery and corruption, in any passage of importance, became in the course of time impracticable. The whole religion, and all the civil and sacred establishments of the Jewish people, were founded upon the books of Moses in particular, which were addressed to his contemporaries—that is to those, who had *seen* his miracles, and *heard* his laws from his own mouth, and guarded with the most zealous care the volumes which recorded them. The Institutions of Moses
were

were incorporated into the commonwealth of the Jews; the existence and support of their government depended upon them; and their religion and laws were so interwoven that they could not be separated. Their right to the land of Canaan depended upon their confession of the sovereignty of God, who gave it to them; and on the truth of the Mosaical history, relative to the divine promises made to the Patriarchs. The dissensions, which prevailed among the Jews and Samaritans, were such checks upon both parties, as to preserve the text of the Law in a state of purity; and the disputes, which prevailed between the Pharisees and Sadducees, served equally to prevent any interpolations in the other books,

Mahomet, the founder of a new religion in Arabia, the acute and determined enemy both of Jews and Christians, who was raised up by Providence to be the scourge of the degenerate Christians of the seventh century, professed his veneration of the Patriarchs and of Moses, and revered the sanctity of the Jewish institutions^w. Sensible of the high esteem, in which they were held among all the nations of the East, he has not only intermixed the most important facts related in them, with the absurd contents of his Law, but has endeavoured, from their expressions, to draw arguments in favour of his own mission^x. But what is the sanction of the

^w Sale's Coran, p. 6. 16. 497, &c.

^x "They say, become Jews, or Christians, that ye may be directed.

the author of the Koran to that given by the writers of the New Testament? The Evangelists and Apostles constantly refer to these sacred books, and more particularly to the Prophecies. They apply, illustrate, explain, and quote abundant texts, not merely as human productions, then popular among their countrymen; but because they contained the commands of God, and were the immediate declarations of his will. And, to bring forward an evidence of the highest authority in their favour, the Saviour of the world himself, even He who came expressly from heaven to bear witness of the truth, exhorted the Jews to *search the Scriptures* for that they testified of him. Frequently as he reproved the Jews for their erroneous doctrines and traditions, he never laid to their charge any corruption of their sacred books. At once to prove their authenticity and divine inspiration, *beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto his disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* In his final instructions to them before his ascension, he reminded them, (I again quote his own most sacred and most decisive expressions,) *These are the words which I spake unto*

directed. Say nay, we follow the religion of Abraham the orthodox, who was no idolater. Say, we believe in God, and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which hath been sent down unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes; and that which was delivered unto Moses, and Jesus, and that which was delivered unto the Prophets from their Lord, &c." Al Koran, chap. 2. entitled the Cow.

you,

you; while I was yet with you; that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me^y. Our Lord, by thus adopting the common division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures, ratified the Canon of the Old Testament; and by declaring so expressly that those books contained prophecies which must be fulfilled, he established their divine inspiration; since it is an attribute of the Almighty alone to enable men to foretel future events with certainty^z.

Abundant witnesses in all succeeding ages can be brought to confirm the authenticity of these holy Scriptures. The Jews, dispersed since the destruction of Jerusalem over all parts of the world, have ever been prepared to suffer any hardship, rather than renounce the commands of their great Lawgiver, and reject the records of their inspired Prophets. They have, in common with the numerous Christian converts, laboured in this pious work of preserving the sacred volume unimpaired by the accidents of time, and uncorrupted by artful interpolation. One generation has transmitted a regular testimony to another, and the chain of evidence has remained unbroken for a series of ages. But where are the pure and unmixed descendants of

^y Luke, xxiv. 44.

^z Bishop of Lincoln's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i. c. i.

the Greeks or Romans, to attest the genuineness of *their* most esteemed books? Where are the subjects of Solon, Lycurgus, or Numa, who at this present time conform to the institutions, and are governed by the edicts of these ancient legislators? As no such evidences are known to exist, vain is it to require them.

To the testimony we derive from the *living* descendants of the Israelites, we have nothing similar in the world for the support of ancient writings, because they not only from age to age have asserted, and still continue to assert their authenticity, under such peculiar circumstances of oppression and foreign dominion; but adhere to the laws contained in the books in question. Their practice is a decisive proof of their belief; and this double evidence, consisting in their conviction of the genuineness of the books, and in the direction of their conduct by the rules those books contain, ascends higher and higher into antiquity, till passing through successive ages, we reach the precise times in which Moses and the Prophets flourished.

Convinced by the clearest arguments of the authenticity of the Old Testament, the great Newton esteemed it the proper introduction to the knowledge of profane antiquity. He found that the periods of Judaical generations and descents, which answered to the fabulous ages of Grecian history, were exactly of the same length with those, which have been measured in later times, since history has
been

been considered as authentic. He ascertained likewise, that the Hebrew accounts coincided with the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the general course of nature; and were not like the Grecian and Roman chronology, which is in many cases founded upon improbable and arbitrary suppositions. Furnished with such an important clue to his discoveries, this great astronomer applied the principles of his favourite science to the elucidation of history. By considering the relation which subsisted between the precession of the equinoxes and the lapse of time, he rectified the whole system of profane chronology^a. Thus he diffused light over a region of darkness, and rendered the records of the Greeks and Romans clear, consistent, and probable, by the application of these principles: but so far was he from disturbing the order of events, or contradicting the computations of time stated in the sacred Books, that their truth and accuracy were invariably confirmed by his researches^b.

Such are some of the proofs which confirm the authenticity of the Old Testament; and from a review of them we conclude, that in point of strength and authority these proofs are superior to

^a The equinoctial points are found by astronomers to change their places, and go backward or westward, contrary to the order of the signs of the Zodiac. This is called their *precession*. Dr. Bradley supposes it to be a degree in about seventy years: the calculation of Sir Isaac Newton does not amount to so much.

^b Priestley's Lectures on History, p. 89, &c.

those that can be adduced to support any other ancient writings.

III. *The Subjects of the Books, and Characters of the Writers.*

The subjects of the Books of the Old Testament are truly wonderful and striking, and of such a nature as to surpass all monuments of profane learning, equally in importance as in antiquity. And of all the parts which compose the sacred canon, none are more curious than *Genesis*, the first book written by Moses; because it contains a sketch of the earliest history of mankind. It gives an account of the creation of the world and its inhabitants, the fall of our first parents from a state of innocence and happiness, and their banishment from the garden of Eden; the repeated promises of a future restorer of the lost blessings of mankind; the history of the Patriarchs, honoured by the Revelations of Jehovah; the description of the general deluge; the dispersion of the progenitors of the human race over all the earth; the adoption of a particular family to perpetuate the remembrance, and establish the worship, of the true God, and their prosperous settlement in Egypt. Instances indeed are mentioned of early depravity, and the violence of the passions, attended with suitable punishments; yet society appears under its simplest form in point of manners, and we discern

cern no traces of the luxury and false refinement of subsequent times.

In the sacred books of the Jews is recorded an account of the descendants of Israel; a race of men selected from all others, and favoured with successive revelations of the divine will. Instances are given of their fidelity, perverseness, and disobedience; of their glory, and triumphs; their disgraces, and their subjection to foreign powers. Here is seen the superintendence of a divine and especial Providence watching over innocence, suspending wrath, and taking the most signal vengeance upon unrepented offences. Here are developed the failings of the most virtuous persons, and the obdurate wickedness of confirmed sinners. Here are displayed the mixed characters even of the most excellent men, the eminent examples of faith and piety, of courage and patience, in the conduct of Abraham, Lot, Job, Joseph, Moses, David, Hezekiah, Josiah, and Daniel. And most interesting is it to observe, that the knowledge of the one true God was communicated to this people, and preserved by them alone; that they had the most sublime ideas of his nature and attributes; that a magnificent temple was erected to his honour, a regular service was instituted; holy ceremonies were performed; an order of priests of one particular family was consecrated; a pure worship was established by his express command, and regulated by his particular laws. Thus were the Jews enlightened by a knowledge of the true object of divine worship; and thus were the

purity and holiness of their religious ordinances conducted at a time, when all other nations presented a wide scene of gross superstition and mental darkness; when the rest of the human race, and even the most intelligent and polished nations of Egypt and Greece, shewed the most abject degradation of their nature, by prostrating themselves before idols of their own workmanship; and contradicted the evidence of their senses and the conviction of their reason, by imputing to statues made of wood or stone the attributes of divine power.

We see likewise a succession of Prophets raised up among them, to communicate the divine will, to warn them of evils, and to announce to them blessings to come. These holy men, ever obedient to the call of heaven, rose superior to all worldly considerations; and with a spirit of intrepidity and independence, which clearly shewed that heaven was the source of their reliance, they executed their sacred commissions, unawed by the threats of kings, or the resentment of the people. They foretold remote events in times when they appeared most improbable ever to take place, and when no human foresight, and no calculation of chances, could guide them to the discovery of the particular affairs, which fulfilled their predictions. Moses, in a long and most interesting detail of threats and promises, foretold the exact manner in which his people were ordained to be happy or miserable, according as they followed or disobeyed the divine laws. At a subsequent period, when Jerusalem was laid in ruins, and the
Jews

Jews were groaning under the sorrows of the Babylonish captivity, Isaiah solemnly addressed Cyrus by his name, more than a hundred years before his birth, as the deliverer of Israel, and the new founder of the Holy City^c. When Babylon was shining in the meridian of her glory, and its monarchs ruled over all the nations of the East with the most uncontrolled sway, the same Prophet predicted the total subversion of their empire, and the complete desolation of their vast metropolis. That all these and numerous other predictions were exactly verified by the events, are truths confirmed by the evidence of profane, as well as sacred history. The same inspired Prophets had a much more grand and important object in view, than to declare the future dispensations of Providence to one nation in particular; for they announced in terms at first dark and mysterious, but progressively more clear and circumstantial, the future birth of a Messiah—a glorious King—a divine Legislator, who was to abolish the sacrifices and religious institutions of the Jews, and proclaim and establish a general Law for the observance and happiness of all mankind. Here the Evangelists contribute their aid to illustrate the declarations of the Prophets, and unite the history of the Old with that of the New Testament, in the closest and most indissoluble bonds of union.

^c Isaiah, B. C. 757. Cyrus, B. C. 589. Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. p. 130.

The historical books of Scripture, considered from the giving of the Law to Moses, to the reformation in the worship and government by Nehemiah, after the Babylonish captivity, contain a summary account of the Jewish affairs for a period of more than ten centuries^d. They were evidently not intended to give a complete detail of national transactions, as their writers had a more sublime and important end in view. To illustrate the prophecies, by relating circumstances which existed at the time when they were uttered, and to show their accomplishment; to record various revelations of the Divine will, and to describe the state of religion among the Hebrews, and the various dispensations of Providence in public, as well as in private occurrences, seem to have been their chief objects. Hence it is that the chain of history is sometimes broken into detached parts, and its detail is interrupted by a recital of private transactions. The books of Scripture occasionally assume the form, and comprise the beauties of a very interesting kind of biography. Of this nature are the book of Job remarkable for the animated stile and sublime subjects of its dialogues, and the simple and pleasing narratives of Ruth and Esther; but they are far from being unconnected with the principal design of the sacred writers; inasmuch as they show that the same divine Providence which presided over the nation at large, extended

^d Moses, B. C. 1571. Nehemiah, B. C. 546.

its particular care to individuals, and that the examples of private virtue were inseparable from the great interests of public welfare and happiness^e.

The Israelites, for many ages separated from the rest of mankind by their peculiar institutions, were little acquainted with commerce, and made small advances in those arts, which with a refinement of taste and a variety of employments, introduce luxury and corruption of manners. They were governed by equal laws, and possessed nearly equal property. They admitted no hereditary distinction of rank, except in favour of the regal tribe of Judah, and the sacerdotal family of Levi. Their occupations from the earliest times were of the most simple kind, and consisted in pasturage and agriculture. To guide the plough, and tend the flock, were employments which, recommended by the innocence of primeval manners, and dignified by length of time, were exercised by kings, prophets, and generals. Moses was called from feeding his flock, to conduct the Israelites to the promised land; Elisha forsook the plough, to be invested with the mantle of prophecy; and Gideon left the threshing-floor, to lead his countrymen to battle.

The country of Judea, presented a scene diversified by fruitful vallies, barren rocks, and lofty mountains, and was watered by numerous streams.

^e Gray's Key, p. 124.

It produced the palm-tree, the balsam, the vine, the olive, the fig, and all the fruits which abound in the East. From the labours of the field, and from cultivating the vine, the attention of the Israelites was regularly called by religious worship, which was intimately blended with the civil constitution of the state. The splendour of their religious services, the pomp and magnificence of their rites and ceremonies, the stated recurrence of their various festivals and sacrifices, the sabbath, the passover, the celebration of the sabbatical year, and the jubilee; and more than all, the constant experience of divine interposition, filled their minds with the most awful and grand ideas, and gave them the deepest impressions of the majesty, power, goodness, and justice of God.

These were the circumstances, which combining to form their national manners, had influence upon their writings. The historical style is marked by the purest simplicity of ideas, occasionally raised to a tone of elevation. In the works of Moses there is a majesty of thought, which is most strikingly expressed in plain and energetic language. In most of the prophetic writings, the greatest splendour and sublimity of composition are conspicuous. The Royal Psalmist is eloquent, dignified, and pathetic. All the beauties of composition unite in Isaiah—such is the majesty of his ideas, the propriety, beauty, and fertility of his imagery, and the elegance of his language, employed upon the noblest subjects which could possibly engage our attention.

attention. Jeremiah excels in those expressions of tendernefs, which excite with the moft pleasing enthufiafm the feelings of compaffion^e.

By fuch peculiar beauties of compofition are recommended the moft interefting details of events, and the moft faithful delineations of characters. The great Creator calls all things into exiftence with his omnipotent word. The firft parents of mankind, innocent and happy, are bleffed with his immediate converfe, and enjoy the blooming groves of Paradife. Jofeph, the pious, the chafte, and the wife, after fuffering great afflictions, and rifing by his own extraordinary merit to an office of the higheft honour in the court of Pharaoh, difcovers himfelf in a manner the moft pathetic to his repentant brethren, and is reftored to his aged and affectionate father, whom he invites into Egypt to fhare his profperity. The Children of Ifrael, guided by the divine Power, which veils its glory in a cloud, pafs fafely through the Red Sea, in which the hofts of the impious Pharaoh are overwhelmed. Upon the lofty fummit of Mount Sinai, Mofes receives the two tables of the Command-

^e “ Quid enim habet univerfa poefis, quid concipere poteft mens humana grandius, excelfius, ardentius, quid etiam venustius et elegantius, quam quæ in facris Hebræorum vatum fcriptis occurrunt? qui magnitudinem rerum fere ineffabilem verborum pondere et carminis majeftate exæquant; quorum cum nonnulli vel ipsis Græcorum poetarum fabulis funt antiquiores, ita omnes tantum eos *sublimitate* exsuperant, quantum *vetustate* antiquiffimi antecedunt.” Lowth, Prælect. p. 16. See likewise p. 7, 8, 21,

ments, amid the thunder, lightning, clouds, and darkness, which obscure the great Jehovah from his eyes. The royal Psalmist sings the wonders of creation, the powers of his God, and his own defeats and triumphs. The peaceful and prosperous Solomon, whose renown was extended over all the East, rears the structure of the magnificent Temple; and amid the multitudes of his adoring subjects consecrates it to the service of the one true God, in a prayer which equally attests his wisdom and piety. In the visions of futurity, Isaiah beholds the deliverance of the chosen People; the complete destruction of the great empire of Babylon, by which they were enslaved; and the promised Messiah, the Saviour of mankind, sometimes depressed by want and sorrow, and sometimes arrayed in the emblems of divine majesty and power. He predicts the final recal of the Jews to their native land, and the wide diffusion of the Christian faith. Jeremiah sinks a weeping mourner over the ruins of his native city, deplores his calamities, and consoles his countrymen by expressly declaring, that they should never cease to be a nation to the end of the world. Daniel explains to Belshazzar the mystic characters inscribed upon the walls of his palace, and views in his wide prospect of future times, the fates of the four great empires of the world. Cyrus, long before announced by Isaiah as the great subverter of the Babylonish empire, and the restorer of the glory of Jerusalem, publishes his decree for the restoration of the captive Jews; and the holy City and Temple rise from their ruins

ruins with new grandeur and magnificence. The Jews are settled and reformed by the pious care of Nehemiah, and the canon of the Scriptures is closed by Malachi. This last of the Prophets enjoins the strict observance of the Law of Moses, till the great Precursor should appear, in the spirit of Elias, to announce the approach of the Messiah, who was to establish a new and an everlasting covenant^f.

Such are a few of the interesting circumstances contained in the sacred volume of the Old Testament, which engage our attention, charm our imagination, and gratify our curiosity, while they confirm our belief in the great evidences of Revelation. In all these works we may remark the bright truths of religious instruction shining forth amid the venerable simplicity of the most ancient history—a history unrivalled for the grandeur of the ideas which it conveys, the liveliness of its descriptions, and the number of its beautiful and sublime images.

In these volumes of sacred history there is an impartiality of narrative, which is an undoubted characteristic of truth. If we read the Lives of

^f For these very impressive passages of the Holy Bible, see Gen. i. ii. xlv. xlv. Exod. xiv. xx. The Psalms. 1 Kings viii. Isaiah ii. vi. ix. x. xi. xiv. xxviii. xxxii. xl. xlii. lx. lxi. lxiii. lxv. and more particularly liii. Lament. i. &c. Daniel v. vii. Ezra vii. Nehem. xiii. Malachi iii. iv.

Plutarch, or the History of Livy, we soon discover that these writers composed their works under the influence of many prejudices in favour of their respective countries. A veil is thrown over the defects of their heroes, but their virtues are placed in a strong light, and painted in vivid colours. In the Scriptures, on the contrary, both of the Old and the New Testament, the strictest impartiality prevails. The vices of David, Solomon, and their successors, are neither concealed nor palliated. There is no ostentation of vanity, no parade of panegyric; virtue charms with her native beauty, and vice acquires no disguise to conceal her deformity. The characters of persons are sketched, and the effects of the passions are represented without reserve or concealment; and the moral to be drawn from each description is so obvious, as to account for the frequent omission of remarks and applications. The abject condition of the Jews, when prohibited the use of weapons of war by the victorious Philistines; their relapses into idolatry, their perverseness of disposition, and their various defeats and captivities, with every circumstance of private as well as public disgrace, are recorded without palliation or reserve. Always rising superior to the motives which induce other authors to violate the purity, and degrade the majesty of truth, these writers keep one great and most important end constantly in view, and show the various methods, by which the providence of God effected his great designs; how he produced good from evil, and employed the sins and follies of

of mankind as the instruments of his gracious purposes for their correction and welfare.

An acquaintance with the affairs of the Jewish nation forms the first link in the chain of ancient records. Thus we may observe the connexion which subsists between the branches of sacred and profane history. We place the works of pagan writers in their proper situation, and give them additional value by making them subservient to the cause of religion, and the illustration of revealed truth. If the student is not called upon by professional inducements to drink the sacred streams at their source, by reading the Scriptures in the original language, he may rest contented with translations; and it seems to be a well-founded opinion among the learned, that he may rely with confidence upon the general fidelity of our English version.

To peruse the holy Scriptures is one of the first employments of childhood. We cannot fail to congratulate ourselves that our time has been thus occupied, when our judgment is sufficiently mature to form a comparative estimate of the various productions of literature, and we are fully able to determine their usefulness. And it will be found, as life is verging to its close—when every other book begins to be insipid and uninteresting, that the HOLY BIBLE, which includes the most ancient records of time, the clearest evidences of a divine revelation, and the joyful promises of eternal happiness,

happiness, will attract us more and more, as old age advances, and will afford us that divine solace and inexpressible satisfaction, which no other writings can give.

“ I durst appeal to the judgment of a candid reader, that there is no history so pleasant as the sacred. Setting aside the majesty of the inditer, none can compare with it for the magnificence and antiquity of the matter, the sweetness of compiling, the strange variety of memorable occurrences: and if the delight be such, what shall the profit be esteemed of that which was written by God for the salvation of Men? I confess no thoughts did ever more sweetly steal me, and time away, than those which I have employed in this subject; and I hope none can equally benefit others; for if the mere relation of these holy things be profitable, how much more when it is reduced to use? ”

In conformity with these observations as to the excellence of the Scriptures, was the opinion of the late Sir William Jones, a person, as much distinguished by the soundness of his judgment, as by his extensive and various learning. In the last leaf of his Bible, these words were written^b: *I have regularly and attentively read these holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume,*

^a Bishop Hall's Meditations.

^b Seward's Anecdotes, vol. v. p. 176.

independently of its divine origin, contains more simplicity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed."

CHAPTER V.

The History of Greece.

GREECE, called by the antient inhabitants *Hellas*, was scarcely half so large as England. It had natural advantages of soil and climate, which influenced the manners, as well as the political institutions of its inhabitants. Some attention to the geography of this interesting country will throw great light upon its mythology, and many parts of its history. The sea nearly furrounded its winding shores, except where it borders upon Epirus and Macedonia. Theffaly was the most northern province, consisting of an extensive and rich valley, completely furrounded by lofty mountains. Olympus divides it from Macedonia; Pindus forms the western boundary of Theffaly, and Æta the southern. Between the foot of mount Æta and the sea, is the famed pass of Thermopylæ, the only way on the eastern side by which the southern provinces can be entered. The tract reaching from Epirus and Theffaly to the Isthmus of Corinth contains the provinces of Acarnania, Ætolia, Doris, Locris, Phocis, Bœotia, and Attica. Bœotia consisted of a rich vale, watered by many streams and lakes, and famed for the mountains Parnassus, Helicon, Cithæron, and Parnes. The two latter formed the

northern boundary of Attica, which was a rocky province, producing little corn or grafs, but abundantly fertile in various fruits, particularly olives and figs.

Southward of this tract of country lies the peninsula of Peloponnesus, inaccessible by land, except across the Bœotian or Attic mountains. The peninsula contains Achaia, Argolis, Elis, Arcadia, Messenia, and Laconia. The vale of Argos was remarkable for its fruitfulness; Achaia is a narrow strip of country on the northern coast, bounded by a chain of mountains from Corinth to Dyme. Elis and Messenia are less mountainous than the other provinces; the latter is level and well adapted to agriculture. The climate of Greece is genial and mild, and the soil in many places fertile. The extensive range of coast abounds with excellent harbours. The lower country afforded rich meadows; the higher, corn, wine, and oil; and of the mountains, some were covered with woods, others contained the finest marbles, and some contained valuable metalsⁱ.

Such is the appearance of the country, which, according to the most authentic records of history, was made in very early times a settlement of co-

ⁱ This account of the History of Greece is taken from Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, and Plutarch; the Travels of Anacharsis, the History of Greece by Mitford and Gillies, De Pauw, and Tytler's Elements of General History.

lonists from Egypt and Phenicia, who, mixing with the natives, built towns, and formed several communities independent of each other. These eastern emigrants brought with them many traditions, which, being afterwards blended with early Grecian history, became the copious sources of mythology. The various inventions and arts, which they introduced among the original inhabitants of Greece, contributed to augment their comforts, and civilize their manners. And as in the general outlines of their religion, government, and arts, the similarity of the political and religious institutions of the East may be traced, Greece furnishes us with an internal evidence of the origin of her colonists.

In the early period of this history there is so great a mixture of Eastern with Grecian stories, and so much confusion of chronology extending through a long series of oral traditions, that an attempt to separate truth from falsehood is as arduous as it is fruitless. Fully sensible of this difficulty, and desirous of removing it by a pleasing, although an imperfect expedient, Thucydides and Strabo, who are both remarkable for their accuracy and judgment, have considered Homer in the light of an Historian^k. That their confidence in the truth of the narrative parts of his Poems was not improperly placed, will appear

^k Thucydides, vol. i. p. 7, 16, 18. Edit. Bipont. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 774.

from considering, that in the rude ages of society the song of the Bard was the only record of past events; and although many of his descriptions may be fanciful, yet some regard to truth, some representation of events and actions which really took place, must have been the ground of the early reputation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The connexion, clearness, and consistency of many anecdotes preserved in them, appear very great, when compared with the dark and uncertain traditions of those early ages. The finished picture of primeval institutions and manners, in the delineation of which Homer descends to many minute particulars, is no less pleasing than satisfactory. He gives a complete view of the religion, government, and arts of his countrymen at the time of the Trojan war, which took place at the very remote period of more than eleven centuries before the Christian era¹. A strong argument in favour of his fidelity may be drawn from the accuracy of his geographical descriptions, which have been verified by the actual observation of many intelligent and inquisitive travellers. And it may incline us more readily to concur with Thucydides and Strabo in thinking, that he truly records the leading facts, and fairly represents the state of manners, at the time of the Trojan war, if we recollect, that in the unaffected energy of his descriptions, and his account of the simplicity of ancient manners, he agrees very remarkably with the writers of the Old

¹ Homer flourished B. C. 907 years.

Testament, and suggests to us the similarity of character, which prevailed between the patriarchs of Canaan and the heroes of Greece.

Greece was divided into a variety of unconnected states, distinguished by different forms of government, and remarkable for frequent revolutions. Yet as the political importance of them all was for the most part relative, and depended, especially in the later and more celebrated periods of their history, upon their connexion with Athens and Lacedemon, these distinguished Republics ought to be considered with a more immediate view to their RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, ARTS, MANNERS, and CONQUESTS.

I. *The Religion of Greece.*

From the Egyptians, and other nations to whom the Greeks were indebted for their earliest laws, they derived their religion. According to the poetical and popular belief, immortal beings of various powers presided over the various parts of the creation. The Oreads governed the mountains, the Dryads the woods, Neptune, the Tritons, and the Nereids ruled the ocean, Apollo the God of Music and the nine Muses presiding over the various kinds of poetry, inhabited mount Helicon. Of all the deities, Jupiter the Father of Gods and Men, restrained by the power of the Fates, was the supreme, and seated on Olympus ruled both heaven and earth,

earth, while Pluto governed the subterraneous realms of departed spirits. To the worship of the twelve principal divinities, the gratitude of succeeding ages added the deification of heroes and legislators, renowned for their important services to society; temples were erected, festivals were instituted, games were celebrated, and sacrifices were offered with more or less pomp and magnificence to them all.

The religion of the people extended little beyond the external honours of sacrifices and processions. The sacred ceremonies were magnificent and public, except that the votaries of Bacchus and Ceres were indulged in their secret mysteries. The festivals were observed with every circumstance of pomp and splendour to charm the eye, and please the imagination. A sacrifice was a feast attended with gaiety, and even licentiousness. Every temple was the resort of the idle and the dissolute; and the shrines of the Cyprian Venus, and the Athenian Minerva, could attest that devotion, far from being a pure and exalted exercise of the mind, was only the introduction to dissoluteness and debauchery. Athens was most renowned for the number of temples, and excelled the rest of the Grecian cities in the frequency and grandeur of her festivals.

The northern regions of Greece were particularly renowned for temples, from whence oracles were issued. The temple of Apollo at Delphi,

situated upon a lofty rock near Parnassus, and that of Jupiter in the groves of Dodona, were celebrated for the responses of the Pythia and the priests; they were held in the greatest veneration for many ages; and their oracles were consulted, even in the most enlightened times, by philosophers themselves, who, in this instance, as well as many others, conformed to the popular superstitions.

The spirit of the religion of ancient Greece was included in these principles,—that the worship of the Gods was of superior obligation and importance to all other duties,—and that they frequently displayed their power in this world, in the punishment of the bad, and the prosperity of the virtuous: such were the opinions inculcated by the most celebrated philosophers and poets. But the common people, more gratified by the fictions of the received mythology, than by tenets of pure ethics, found in the actions recorded of their gods and goddesses, a sufficient excuse for licentiousness of every kind.

With respect to a *Future State* of existence, the philosophers appear to have been uncertain, as may be collected from the sentiments of Socrates himself. The poets inculcated a belief in Tartarus and Elysium. Of the former they have drawn a picture in the most gloomy and horrific colours, describing it as the place where men, who had been remarkable for impiety to the gods, such as Tantalus,

talus, Tityus, and Sisyphus, were tortured with a variety of misery, ingeniously adapted to their crimes. The prospect of Elysium is more beautiful and inviting, as described by Hesiod and Pindar, than that given by Homer. In that delightful region there is no inclement weather, but the soft Zephyrs blow from the ocean to refresh the inhabitants, who live without care or anxiety; there reign perpetual sunshine and serenity of sky, and the fertile earth thrice in a year produces delicious fruits for their sustenance. These enjoyments were, however, not only of a gross and sensual nature, but were limited to persons of rank and distinction. Proteus informs Menelaus, that he shall be conveyed to the islands of the blessed, because he is the husband of Helen, and the son in law of Jupiter^m. No incentives to goodness, from the consideration of a future state, are held out by the older poets to the female sex, or to the ignoble or vulgar, however pure their conduct, or exemplary their virtues. In later times we find, that Pindar extends his rewards to good men in general; but Euripides is sometimes sceptical, and Iphigenia, the principal character in one of his tragedies, without hesitation expresses her disbelief of the popular mythology.

It is well remarked by the ingenious and learned Jortin, "That it gives us pleasure to trace in Homer the important doctrine of a supreme God,

^m Odyss. iv. l. 56.

a providence, a free agency in man, supposed to be consistent with fate or destiny; a difference between moral good and evil, inferior gods, or angels, some favourable to men, others malevolent; and the immortality of the soul: but it gives us pain to find these notions so miserably corrupted, that they must have had a very weak influence to excite men to virtue, and to deter them from viceⁿ." This observation may be applied to the state of opinions even in the most enlightened times of Greece, when the credulity and ignorance of the vulgar, and the errors and doubts of the greatest philosophers, proved the *necessity* and the *importance* of the Christian revelation, with respect both to the duties of man, and the incentives to the discharge of those duties, arising from his final destination.

The characters of the two great legislators of Sparta and Athens were evidently very different. Lycurgus was distinguished by the vigour and the inflexibility of his disposition. Solon was mild, circumspect, and compliant. The marks of their tempers were visibly impressed upon their respective political establishments.

II. Sparta.

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the constitution of Sparta, previous to the time of LYCURGUS,

ⁿ Jortin, Dissertation VI. p. 245.

any farther than to observe, that there were two hereditary kings, or presidents, whose power he controlled by giving an equal authority to twenty-eight senators°. The kings were commanders of the armies, and high priests of the temples. Of the senators was composed the executive and legislative council of the state, and with them all laws originated. The assembly of the people was invested with the power of electing the senators; they could give a simple negative, or affirmative, to the measures proposed to them, but had no right to discuss their propriety. Lycurgus allotted to every family an equal share of land, prohibited the use of gold and silver, and made iron money alone current, with a view to check the avarice of his subjects. He forbade foreign travel, lest their morals should be corrupted by an intercourse with effeminate nations. He instituted public tables, at which even the kings of Sparta were required to share the coarsest viands with their people, and to set examples of the most rigid temperance. To produce a hardy and vigorous race of men, he ordered the women not to be confined to the sedentary employments of the distaff and the shuttle, but to be exercised in throwing the quoit, and hurling the spear. The children were carefully inspected as soon as born; the well-proportioned and

° B. C. 884 years. "We are told, that Lycurgus being asked why he, who in other respects appeared so zealous for the equal rights of men, did not make his government democratical rather than oligarchal, "Go, you," the legislator answered, "*and try a democracy in your own house.*"

healthy were delivered to the public nurses; and the deformed, or sickly, were exposed to perish in the wilds of Mount Taygetus. Celibacy was held disreputable; yet the rights of female honour and marriage were not secured from violation: for provided the children born by promiscuous intercourse were strong and robust, no inquiry was made to ascertain their fathers. All children were considered as the offspring, or rather the property, of the state; and their public education consisted in accustoming them to bear the cravings of hunger and thirst, to suffer extreme heat and cold, sleep in the open air, and endure the scourge of discipline, and every degree of pain with patience, and even exultation. As they approached to manhood, their discipline was made more severe. Military and athletic exercises employed the largest portion of their time; it was held disreputable for private business or domestic concerns to engross their attention. The whole energy of their minds was directed to war, and they lived as if always in a camp. Plutarch observed, that they were taught neither to desire nor to know how to live by themselves nor for themselves. Their passions and ambition were absorbed in the public service, and as they were hardened by constant exercise, they were both eager to undertake, and powerful to accomplish every exploit for the glory of their country.

As Lycurgus wished his people to enjoy complete independence, he provided the means of security against foreign attacks by establishing the

the strictest military discipline. In order, however, to guard against the desire of conquest, he forbade his subjects to engage too frequently in war with the same nations. This was the curb, by which he endeavoured to restrain their military ardour: the desire of conquest however was a disease inherent in the vitals of his system, and it frequently broke out in succeeding times, as often as any temptation occurred of extending their dominions. By laws the most severe ever imposed on mankind, Lycurgus formed the habits of his people, and even far surpassed other legislators, by regulating their conduct in many circumstances, which are generally supposed not to come within the province of legal restrictions. He prescribed the most rigid sobriety, respect to age, modesty of behaviour, and even a particular kind of mirth and conversation. In other governments, many institutions arise out of accidental circumstances; the character of the people, and the particular state of affairs: but in Lacedemon almost every rule seems to have sprung from the comprehensive mind of Lycurgus, and his plan of government was eminently his own. Before his death he saw every part of his political machine set in motion. The Spartans exulted in their new strength; and their desire to exert it was so ardent, that they were soon distinguished among the neighbouring states as a warlike and formidable people. For many ages they firmly adhered to the will of their lawgiver; and, not to adduce other examples, the monument erected in the straits of Thermopylæ, to record the
glorious

glorious fall of Leonidas, king of Sparta, and his three hundred brave associates, expressed in an inscription characteristic of the genius and spirit of the nation, that they maintained their post to the last extremity, in obedience to the orders of their country ^P.

The reverence of the Spartans for old age, their abstemiousness, perfect discipline, and great bravery, must not so far blind our judgment, as to induce us to palliate the imperfections of their laws, and the impropriety of their conduct. The honour in which they held the successful perpetration of theft, their cruelty to their slaves, their inhumanity to children, the indelicacy of their conduct to women, and the insensibility and masculine energy of character, with which they endeavoured to inspire them, all unite to mark a ferocious and a barbarous people. The improvement of the mind, and the purest feelings of nature, were sacrificed to severe discipline, and the business of war. They extended the same rigour to

P Ω ξειν' αγγελλειν Λακεδαιμονιοις οτι τηδε

κειμεθα, τοις κεινων ρημασι πειδομενοι.

Herod. lib. vii. sect. 455.

The sentiment is the same which Demaratus expressed to Xerxes in his character of the Spartans. Herod. Polym. sect. civ.

To them more awful than the name of king
To Asia's trembling millions, is the law,
Whose sacred voice enjoins them to confront
Unnumber'd foes, to vanquish or to die.

Glover's Leonidas.

their

their allies, which they exercised at home; and thus became the objects of hostility and aversion. By a strange inconsistency in their laws, they were trained to arms, but stopped in the career of conquest; they were made a nation of warriors, yet forbidden to pursue a flying enemy, or to enrich themselves with his spoils.

Eminent as they were in the field of battle, both kings and generals were incapable of composing the histories of their campaigns, and no book has ever been transmitted to modern times, written by a genuine Spartan of the Doric race. They preferred the exercise of arms to the cultivation of letters, and left their exploits to be handed down to posterity by their enemies.

During the reign of fourteen successive kings, for the long period of five hundred years, their power and influence were felt throughout Greece; and for a considerable part of that period, the glory of Sparta eclipsed the other states. But in process of time the austere manners of her warriors were relaxed by success. The universal applause with which they welcomed, and the rapacity with which they divided, the spoils of Athens, when that city was taken by Lyfander, were strong indications of their degeneracy. Of this gradual departure from the institutions of Lycurgus, their subsequent venality, luxury, and avarice, were sufficient proofs.

III. *Athens.*

A fairer order of civil polity is displayed in the constitution of Athens; a constitution, which furnished not only a model for the laws of Rome, but for most of the nations of modern Europe. It was a regular system of jurisprudence, extending to every class of citizens. The most judicious writers agree, that those improvements, which formed the peculiar merit of Athens, were introduced by Solon, about two centuries and a half after the reign of Lycurgus.

The situation of Attica naturally directed the attention of its inhabitants to commerce, and naval affairs. They possessed a country, which although fruitful in vines and olives, was not adequate to the support of its inhabitants, without a supply of foreign produce. This defect naturally pointed out the sea to them as the proper sphere for their exertions, and in process of time they rose to the highest eminence, as a commercial state; their great intercourse with strangers gave a particular direction to their laws, and promoted that urbanity of manners, by which they were so eminently distinguished^a.

Solon

^a See the beautiful picture of Attica, drawn by Sophocles, in the first Chorus of *Œdipus Coloneus*. He celebrates the beauty of his native country, the various productions of the soil,

Solon an Athenian, of the race of Codrus, attained the dignity of Archon 594 years before Christ, and rendered his name immortal by framing for his countrymen a new form of government, and a new system of laws. He secured peculiar privileges to the rich, and admitted the poor to an ample share of the government. He divided the citizens into four classes; to the three first, composed of the rich, were confined all the offices of the state; the fourth, consisting of the poor, had an equal right of voting in the public assembly, in which all laws were passed. As they were more numerous than all the rest, their suffrages might have given them an influence in all deliberations dangerous to the public tranquillity. In order to prevent this evil, and to regulate the proceedings of an assembly thus constituted, he established a balance of power in the council of five hundred. The members of this council were appointed every year by lot, and were obliged to stand the test of a severe scrutiny into their characters, before they were invested with their office. They directed all political concerns, and prepared business for the assembly of the people, to whom no measure was proposed without their previous sanction. Solon likewise restored the court of Areopagus, so much famed for the pure administration of justice,

foil, and the matchless skill of the Athenians in horsemanship and naval affairs. It abounds with images so truly poetical, that the Old Scholiast might well call it—το γλαφυρόν καὶ ᾠδικόν μελός. Johnson's Soph. Tom. ii. p. 225.

and the unfulfilled character of its members, who exercised a judicial power, and tried criminals for capital offences. It was their duty to inspect the general behaviour of the citizens, superintend the conduct of youth, and take care they were educated and employed in a manner suitable to their rank. But their greatest privileges consisted in a power of reversing the decrees of the popular assembly, in rescuing the condemned from their sentence, and condemning the acquitted. Of the justice, impartiality, and wisdom of the Areopagus, in the exercise of their supreme authority, no higher idea can be given than by the lofty panegyric of Cicero, who affirmed, that this council was as essential to the prosperity of Athens, as the providence of the Gods to the government of the world. By the establishment of these two assemblies, a large mixture of aristocracy was infused into the commonwealth, and the administration of public affairs was secured against much of the danger of popular tumult and violence.

In addition to the general assembly of the people, the Areopagus, and the council of five hundred, there were no less than ten courts of judicature; four for criminal, and six for civil causes. Over these presided nine archons, who were invested with great authority, and the magistrate who for the sake of pre-eminence was styled "the Archon," exercised a religious, as well as a civil jurisdiction. But the merits of the causes, and the validity of the evidence which were submitted to their consideration,

sideration, were decided by a certain number of men, selected from the citizens at large. This Athenian establishment may bring to our mind one of the most celebrated institutions in the legal polity of Great Britain; and the experience of Englishmen, from the days of the immortal Alfred to the present times, can give the fullest testimony to the general equity and singular excellence of our *Trial by Jury*.

The number of slaves both in Athens and Sparta, when compared to citizens, was very large. From a computation made in the time of Demetrius Phalereus, it appears, that there were more than twenty thousand Athenians qualified to vote in the public assembly; at the same time, the slaves amounted to twenty times that number*. Plutarch has enabled us to ascertain the numbers of the Lacedemonians at one particular period, as he states, that by the division of their lands, a competent subsistence was procured for thirty-nine thousand families. Their slaves appear not to have been less in proportion than those of Athens, even after repeated massacres to diminish their number. It was not merely by the effects of conquest, that so many were reduced to a servile state, as was the case of the unfortunate Helots; but many of the citizens of Athens were driven by extreme indigence to sell themselves to the wealthy.

* B. C. 317.

Y 2

After

After the death of Solon, Pisistratus succeeded to the sovereign power. He was called indeed a tyrant; but his government was splendid and mild. He transmitted the command to his sons Hippias and Hipparchus. Harmodius and Aristogiton, celebrated as patriots in a very beautiful song of high antiquity, succeeded in putting Hipparchus to death, and restored the democracy. Illustrious birth was for some time considered necessary to enable a citizen to obtain the administration of public affairs. Themistocles and Aristides were the first who gained high offices from the mere influence of their characters and talents. The distribution of money afterwards secured an undue authority. Cimon bribed the people at his own expence, and Pericles set the more ruinous example of paying them out of the public treasury. The great concessions made to the populace at various times, tended to undermine the institutions of Solon, and before the age of Demosthenes, the ancient spirit of the Constitution was extinguished, and the whole management of state affairs was abandoned to intriguing and unprincipled demagogues.

The different laws of Sparta and Athens produced, in the course of time, a corresponding difference in their manners; the performances of the theatre, the popular assemblies, and the sacred festivals, employed the inhabitants of Athens, while the Spartans, indulging in no amusement or relaxation, were incessantly busied in the exercises of war. The streets of Athens

refounded with the lively notes of music, and their songs were dictated by the tender passions of pity and love: the poets of Sparta rehearsed only the stern virtues of departed heroes, or roused her sons to martial exploits by the description of battles, victory, and death. In Athens the sportive sallies of wit, and the gay images of fancy, gave a peculiar vivacity to social intercourse: the seriousness of a Spartan was manifested in his cautious reserve, his grave deportment, and the peculiar conciseness of his sharp and pointed repartee; the virtues of a Spartan were gloomy and austere; the dissipation of an Athenian was engaging and agreeable. The one was an illiterate soldier, whose character was formed by martial discipline alone; the other was a man of genius, of taste, and of letters, who enjoyed the advantages of refinement and knowledge^r. The moroseness of the Spartan was increased by holding no intercourse with other nations; whereas by the laws of Solon, strangers were invited to Athens, and were admitted to all the privileges of citizens.

^r This contrast of character is finely touched by Pericles in his celebrated Oration on the Athenians slain in the Peloponnesian war.

Και μὴν καὶ τῶν πονῶν πλείστας ἀναπαύλας τῇ γυνὴ ἠπορίσαμεθα, ἀγῶσι μὲν γε καὶ θυσιαῖς δειήσίοις νομιζούσας, ἰδίας δὲ κάλασκευαῖς εὐπρεπέσιν ὧν καθ' ἡμέραν ἡ τεῖψις το λυπηρὸν ἐκπλησσει. ἐπεισερχεται δὲ διὰ μεγέθους τῆς πόλεως ἐκ πάσης γῆς τὰ παντα· καὶ ἑυμβαίνει ἡμῖν μὴδὲν οἰκειότιστα τῇ ἀπολαύσει τὰ αὐτὰ ἀγαθὰ γιγνομένα καρπεῖσθαι, ἢ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων. Διαφερομεν δὲ καὶ ταῖς τῶν πόλεμικῶν μελέταις τῶν ἐναντίων ταῖςδε. τὴν τε γὰρ πόλιν κοινὴν παρέχομεν, καὶ ἐκ ἐστὶν ὅτε ξενηλασίαις ἀπειργαζομεν τίνα ἡ μαθηματὸν ἢ θεαματὸν, &c. Thucy. Lib. 2, p. 57. Tom. 2. Ed. Bipont.

In Athens, liberty of action was shewn in every indulgence of social pleasure ; in Sparta, the spirit of society, divested of its charms to amuse and to enliven, was made subservient to the affairs of the state. The temper of Sparta was depressed by excessive restraint, while that of her rival was vain, arrogant, licentious, and fickle. Impatient both of freedom and slavery, these great republics had few principles in common except glory and ambition ; and they continually embarrassed each other in the execution of their respective projects to obtain the sovereignty of Greece. The spirit of independence, however, was predominant in the other states ; and the yoke either of Sparta or Athens was regarded as heavy and intolerable. Discordant as their respective interests were, a train of events succeeded, which caused them to suspend their animosities, to unite in a general alliance, and to equip their fleets, and lead forth their armies, not only to repel a formidable invasion, but to avert the storm which threatened the destruction of their political existence.

Among the colonies of Greece, settled upon the coasts of Asia Minor, the Ionians occupied the most pleasant and fertile territories. In order to resist the force of the Persian power, which was exerted to crush their insurrection, they solicited the aid of Athens, their mother country. Reinforced by her assistance, they burnt the ancient city of Sardis ; and although the Ionians were soon after reduced to submission, the resentment of Darius, the Persian monarch,

monarch was roused to inflict vengeance on the Athenians for their interference. He demanded earth and water as tokens of their submission; and on their spirited refusal, he began his hostile attacks against them both by sea and land. Such were the cause and the commencement of those memorable wars, which contributed to mature the martial genius of the Greeks; and the interesting accounts of which give dignity, splendour, and glory, to the most authentic pages of their history.

The train of events to which this dissention led, involved likewise the most important interests of the Persians; for the wars, begun upon slight grounds with the Greeks, terminated at last in the subversion of their empire.

IV. *The most glorious Age of Greece.*

Of all the expeditions recorded in ancient history, that which was carried on against Greece by the Persians is mentioned as the most formidable, whether the great forces which were brought into the field, or the obstacles which they surmounted previous to their engagement with their enemies, be considered. The minute and exact relation given by Herodotus of the vast preparations made by Xerxes, and the ardour with which he pursued his romantic enterprize, contribute to raise the reputation and glory of the Greeks to the highest pitch, when we consider the apparently inadequate

means of their defence and resistance. Yet what was the success of the vain despot of innumerable hordes of undisciplined barbarians, when opposed to the determined valour and confirmed discipline of regular armies, commanded by generals of consummate talents and approved experience? The Historian above mentioned will give us the most satisfactory answer to this question.

The signal victory obtained in the plains of Marathon over the Persians, was effected by the sagacity, experience, and valour of Miltiades. The fall of Leonidas, and his illustrious Spartans in the straits of Thermopylæ, taught Xerxes to respect their unexampled prowess, and to regret a victory obtained over a small band of heroes, by the loss of the choicest soldiers of his army^s. The Athenians, after abandoning their city, and conveying their wives and families to the islands for security, embarked on board their ships, and under the conduct of Themistocles, engaged the fleet of Xerxes in the straits of Salamis^t. From a lofty throne on Mount Egialos, the Persian monarch observed the action, and witnessed the total destruction of his vast navy. The battle of Plataea established the renown of Pausanias, and his victory was rewarded with the costly spoils of the Persian camp. On the same day, the Greeks were equally successful at the promontory of Mycale in Ionia, where they devoted the rich camp and powerful fleet of the enemy to the flames.

^s B. C. 480. ^t B. C. 480.

Cimon, the son of Miltiades, attacked and defeated the Persian fleet, and landing in Cilicia, gained a second victory, by routing an immense army under the command of Megabyzes. Artaxerxes finding it vain to contend with a nation of heroes, solicited a peace, which was established on conditions highly advantageous to the Greeks. It was agreed that all the Grecian cities upon the coasts of Asia should enjoy their full independence, and that the Persian fleets should not approach their coasts from the Euxine sea to the borders of Pamphylia. A war so glorious, and a peace so honourable, were the united fruits of Grecian unanimity and valour^u.

For half a century after the repulse of the armies of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes, Athens maintained, without controul, the pre-eminence of her power. The farther progress of the Athenians, in extending their dominions, was assisted by colonization and commerce. Their navies rode the seas in triumph, and their merchants exchanged the superfluous productions of Attica for the choicest fruits of distant countries. The large and fertile island of Eubœa was numbered among their territories; their dominion extended over the Asiatic coast for the space of a thousand miles, from Cyprus to the Thracian Bosphorus, and over forty intermediate islands. They planted colonies on the winding shores of Macedon and Thrace, and commanded the coasts

^u The victory obtained at Marathon, B. C. 490; at Salamis, 480; at Plataea, 479; at Pamphylia, 460.

of the Euxine Sea from Pontus to Cherfonefus Taurica, or Crim Tartary. These trophies of naval power were erected, not over ignorant barbarians, but over men, who had the same language and laws, the same arts and lineage, who had every thing common with their mother country, except skill in navigation and prowess in the field.

And here we pause, to contemplate the striking qualities of those chiefs, who distinguished themselves so much in the service of liberty and Greece, when the Persians were driven from her shores. The illustrious persons, who most contributed to raise Athens to its highest pitch of martial glory were Miltiades, Themistocles, Cimon, and Aristides. Miltiades united the most acute penetration into the designs of the enemy, to a perfect acquaintance with his own army; and when it was necessary to hazard an engagement, he always displayed his talents in choosing such a field of battle as gave him a decided advantage. Themistocles acquired the greatest renown by directing the whole attention of his countrymen to naval affairs, and securing the command of the ocean. Aristides, equally illustrious for his integrity, intrepidity, and moderation, shared the glory of Miltiades in the plains of Marathon, and was distinguished by his military talents both at Salamis and Plataea. By his judicious conduct he strengthened the Grecian confederacy, and provided ample supplies for the continuance of the war. Cimon, equal in courage to Themistocles and Miltiades, and superior in integrity of conduct,

duct, brought the navy of Athens to such perfection, and encountered the enemy with such success, that Persia, degraded and beaten both by sea and land, was confined to the limits of her own empire.

It is however melancholy, after viewing these illustrious persons in the meridian of their fame, to remark the storms of misfortune which obscured and harraſſed some parts of their lives. Miltiades, persecuted by a relentless faction, died in prison of the wounds he had received in the service of his country. Aristides, Themistocles, and Cimon were condemned to exile; and Phocion, the despiser of the gold of Alexander, and the successful opposer of the Macedonians, suffered death by a decree of the people.—Such were the rewards bestowed upon persons the most eminent for military talents and public services under a democratical government! The hatred even of that honourable ambition which was excited by the praise of the people themselves, and encouraged by their most distinguished favours;—the most trifling apprehension of an invasion of their liberty, the jealousy of aspiring talents, hurried the popular assemblies of Athens into acts of cruelty, ingratitude, and oppression, against their most deserving patriots, and greatest benefactors.

Nor was less severity in many instances exercised against artists and philosophers. Phidias, the most excellent of sculptors, was falsely accused of embezzling part of the gold he had received for decorating

rating the statue of Minerva, and closed his life in prison^x. Anaxagoras, who founded the principles of a pure philosophy, upon the investigation of the works of nature, was prosecuted for a charge of impiety, and driven into exile. Even Socrates, his amiable disciple, was condemned to suffer death^y.

We have already observed, that these were not the only sufferers under a democratical form of government. The most numerous class of the inhabitants of Greece consisted of slaves—a description of persons, who without any regard to their possessing the same powers and faculties, both of body and mind, as their masters, were wholly abandoned to the mercy of their despotic will. They were employed in the most degrading manner, and, without enjoying the privilege of appealing for redress to the civil magistrate, or speaking in their own defence in a court of justice, were, upon the most trivial pretences, chastised with blows and scourging, and condemned to the rack. No hopes of future good alleviated their hard condition; for although with a degree of refined policy their increase was encouraged, they had nothing to bequeath to their offspring, but an inheritance of misery, and a condition of degraded humanity worse than that of the brute creation. The historian Ælian says expressly, that it was the common opinion of all Greece, that a terrible earthquake,

^x B. C. 432.^y B. C. 400.

which

which happened 467 years before Christ, was a judgment from heaven upon the Spartans, for treating their slaves with cruelty^z.

In Athens, it must be confessed, they were treated with less cruelty, were under less restraint, and were in many cases permitted to claim the protection of the laws. Their courage in war was sometimes recompensed by the gift of liberty; yet even in a state which boasted to be the nurse of freedom, and the mistress of refinement, there was a public slave market. The Spartans disdained the occupations of agriculture and trade, and committed every low and mechanical employment to the wretched descendants of the inhabitants of Helos, whose city they had rased for refusing to pay them tribute. In return for their faithful services, these unfortunate men were treated in the most rigid and barbarous manner, and the dexterity with which their inhuman masters could surprise and destroy an enemy by ambuscade, was frequently practised upon their wretched domestics, while labouring in large parties in the fields.

The conduct of the Greeks to their slaves seems to prove, that they esteemed liberty and its blessings their own exclusive privilege. It is indeed a singular inconsistency in their character, that at the time when they were exercising despotic sway over their wretched domestics, the orators were employed

^z Hist. Var. lib. iii.

in the most severe invectives against arbitrary power, and all Greece was roused to oppose the tyrants of Persia and Macedon. Rome also, even in the periods of her history most remarkable for refinement, and civilization, boasted of the multitude of her slaves. In *modern* times, the same oppressive institution has been continued, but attended with circumstances of cruelty respecting the modes by which slaves are procured, which would put a Roman, or a Greek, to the blush. The innocent and wild natives of the forests and deserts are snatched from their beloved shores, torn from every tender connexion, and condemned to imprisonment and chains, during a tedious and painful voyage, which is only a prelude to greater afflictions. The lamentations of Africa, for the loss of her unoffending natives, are heard from Guinea to the Cape of Good Hope. The eternal laws of justice, the tears of humanity, and the mild and merciful principles of Christianity, call not only for a mitigation, but an abolition of this traffic in human flesh. But the Europeans, even those who bear the name of Protestants and of Englishmen, listen too earnestly to the voice of self-interest: their miserable slaves are still condemned to drag the chains of bondage, while many of their masters are regardless of their hard condition, their sufferings, and even their despair.

V. The Grecian Women.

The Grecian women continued to be kept in seclusion and retirement, even in the most refined times, from a respect to ancient customs. Their residence was limited to a secluded part of the house, which took its name from its particular destination to their use: they were visited by no persons but their nearest relations, and when they went from home, they were obliged by law to be attended by a slave, carrying a lighted torch. Their companions were their female slaves, with whom they were upon a level in point of accomplishments, and their time which they spared from bringing up their children was engaged by the employments of the distaff and the shuttle. They seldom appeared in public except at religious festivals and in solemn processions. Such a mode of life was not only calculated to inspire them with modesty and diffidence, which is natural to persons unaccustomed to promiscuous conversation, and public life, but to cherish the growth of domestic virtues. One of the greatest orators of Athens gives a lively idea of this recluse state, by asserting, that it was the highest honour to a woman not to be the object either of public praise or censure. Amid the disorders of democratical government, and the activity of military expeditions, no leisure was found for the sexes to improve the arts of conversation, enlarge the sphere of their knowledge, and polish their manners. The female character was degraded, the passion of
love

love was coarse and indelicate, and the women were looked upon rather as the slaves than the equals of men. Their education was totally neglected, and little value was set upon those female accomplishments, which, combined with the charms of beauty, and native elegance of mind, have so much influence in improving the manners of the moderns.

It seems probable, that this may be relied upon as a just picture of the modest women of Athens. During the period we are considering, courtesans, skilled in all the arts of seduction, were numerous throughout Greece, and their profession was countenanced by men of the first eminence. The beautiful Aspasia, born at Miletus, the chief city of Ionia, was the first who introduced Asiatic elegance into Europe. She had the gratification to add Pericles to the list of her admirers, and gained such influence over him, that he was accused of engaging his country in wars to avenge her quarrels. Under his sanction, she formed a society of courtesans, whose arts were employed to attach the young Athenians to her interest. Such were the charms of her conversation, that Socrates himself, his pupil Alcibiades, and the most respectable artists, frequented her house. This circumstance may furnish a proof of the low state of mental accomplishments in the virtuous part of the sex, even during the most refined period of Grecian history.

The

The splendid train of success, which rewarded the valour of Athens in the fifth century before Christ, forms the most glorious era in her annals. In the early parts of this history, it is necessary to have recourse to very uncertain accounts to satisfy our inquiries; sometimes we must be content with the fables of poets, or of tradition, and we must acquiesce in conjecture, where authentic memorials are not to be obtained. But with respect to this illustrious period, the difficulty consists rather in the choice, than the discovery of materials. The treasures of information are rich and various, as these topics have been recorded by the diligence of historians, adorned by the eloquence of orators, and heightened by the invention of poets. The light of genius diffuses its most splendid radiance over objects, which were not only endeared to all the writers of Greece by the attachment of patriotism, but supplied the best foundations for their literary fame. The triumphs obtained over the Persians are consecrated to endless renown by the works of Æschylus, Lyfias, Isocrates, Demosthenes, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon^b.

Our surprise, when we remark the small number of those Greeks, who on such distinguished occasions vanquished very superior numbers of Persians, will be diminished, when we consider the compara-

^b Æschylus flourished B.C. 458. Herodotus 445. Thucydides 426. Lyfias 412. Xenophon 400. Isocrates 377. Demosthenes 350.

tive state of military education and discipline. The Greeks acquired by their gymnastic exercises a robust constitution, and agility of limbs. The successful competitor for the crown of victory, by running the race, hurling the spear, or driving the chariot, obtained no less renown for himself than he reflected on his family and his country; and he was exalted in the opinion of the applauding multitudes to the summit of human felicity. "Die," said his congratulating companions to Anaxagoras, who had obtained a prize in the games, "die, for thou canst not be a God." The post of honour in battle was the reward of courage, alacrity, and skill in the Olympic contests. Their frequent wars enured the Greeks to hardships and fatigues, and accustomed them to those rapid movements in the field, which often decided the fate of armies. Those who signalised themselves in the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea, had before obtained rewards at the public games. There the flame of emulation was kindled, which afterwards burned with inextinguishable ardour, whenever they stimulated each other by the most powerful considerations, to fight for the temples of their gods, the tombs of their ancestors, and the safety of their wives and children^c.

^c Such was the exhortation which resounded through the leading squadron of their fleet at the battle of Salamis.

Ω παῖδες Ἑλλήνων ἰτε,
 Ελευθεῖτε πατρίδ', ελευθεῖτε δε
 Παιδας, γυναῖκας, θεῶν τε πατρῶων εἶδη,
 Θῆκας τε προγόνων, ἣν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀγων.

Æschyli Persæ, l. 400.

Their

Their close and firm phalanx, formed of the most robust and hardy youth in the front ranks, and the most steady veterans in the rear, was scarcely to be resisted by any superiority of undisciplined numbers. Upon their heads they wore helmets of iron, their bodies were covered with coats of mail, and protected by massy bucklers, their legs were fenced with brazen greaves, and their offensive weapons were two-edged swords, and long spears. The Persians on the contrary, in comparison with the troops of Greece, formed only an irregular crowd, composed of various nations^d. Their weapons of attack were darts, bows and arrows, their left hands supported like targets of osier, upon their heads they wore filken turbans, and their bodies were covered with plates of thin metal. But their inferiority, when compared with their enemies, was in no respect so manifest, as in the want of emulation and public spirit. Their minds were enervated by the enjoyment of wealth and luxury, and fettered by the bondage of tyranny. They were insensible to that love of glory, and to that pure and disinterested spirit of enterprise, which fired the breast of every Grecian soldier, and prompted him to seek the field of battle, as the noblest sphere for the exercise of his talents.

^d There is a full and poetical enumeration of the troops that followed Xerxes, in the beginning of the *Persæ* of Æschylus. He describes what he saw, for he fought at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea. He represents the Persian army as chiefly consisting of cavalry, and armed in the manner I have mentioned.

“ While the army of Xerxes was recommencing their march from Thermopylæ, some Arcadians were tempted by the fame of the great king’s riches and liberality, to offer their services to him. Herodotus seems to relate their story, not more for the purposes of eulogy, than of admonition to his country. They were introduced, he says, to the presence of Xerxes, and being asked what was doing in Greece, they answered with great simplicity, that it was the season of the Olympian games, and that consequently, the Greeks were amusing themselves with seeing athletic exercises, and horse-races. Being again asked what was the reward of the conquerors in those games, they answered, an olive garland. Upon which, Tritantæchmes, a prince of the blood-royal of Persia, exclaimed—O Mardonius, what a people have you brought us to fight against, who contend among themselves—not for riches, but for virtue^e!”

^e Mitford’s Greece, vol. i. p. 394.

CHAPTER VI.

*The History of Greece continued.**Philosophy, Literature, and Arts.*

THE same spirit of competition which roused the Grecian cities to contend for victory and renown, excited them to a rivalry of talents. As soon as their apprehensions of danger from the inroads of barbarians were removed, they began to cultivate the arts of elegance; and the defeat of the Persian power, and the death of Alexander the Great, containing an intermediate space of 180 years, displayed the genius of Greece shining with its brightest splendour. The name of the painter and the sculptor was celebrated in festivals; their works were exhibited at the public games, and they were reputed to confer, by every specimen of their art, distinguished honour upon their country. The monuments of their talents reflected lustre upon their character, and gave it the highest respectability; as it was their noble province to express the likenesses of heroes, and to embody the perfections

of the gods^f. To be publicly distinguished with higher honours than his competitors, was the great object of the artist, and his unremitting and ardent efforts to excel them, gave to his works that grace, beauty, and spirit, that exquisite expression of passions, and appropriate dignity of character, which mark the Venus de Medici, the Apollo Belvidere, and the Laocoon. And if the opinion of some modern connoisseurs be well founded, that these statues were the productions of *later* artists, what must we conclude the *originals* of such masterly copies to have been? Certainly such as to raise our ideas to the highest pitch of attainable perfection.

The arts called forth by the most lively images the great events and characters of history. The public edifices of Athens were adorned with the statues of warriors, magistrates, legislators, philosophers, and orators. In one place stood Miltiades, frowning destruction on Persia; in another, the placid Socrates, the thoughtful Solon, or the impassioned Demosthenes. Every street presented an Athenian with some striking image of patriotism,

^f For the causes of the superiority of the Greek artists, see Winkelmann's *L'Art d'Antiquité*, an elegant and pleasing work, tom. ii. p. i, &c. A beautiful chapter on the Origin, Progress, and Decline of Arts in Greece, may be found in tom. i. p. 37. tom. ii. c. i. For a description of the Venus de Medici, see Spence's *Polymetis*, p. 66. Winkelmann, tom. ii. p. 75.—the Apollo Belvidere, Spence, p. 83. Winkelmann, tom. iii. p. 195—the Laocoon, tom. i. p. 68.

wisdom, or valour. Wherever he turned his eyes, he saw some monument raised to perpetuate the renown of his ancestors; and the tribute of the arts, so liberally paid to all persons of genius, courage, and virtue, gave the keenest excitement to the display of every species of excellence.

Ancient sculpture is distinguished by the high and the fine styles. The works of Phidias, Polycletus, and Myron were celebrated for the *high* style, as their principal object was to combine beauty with sublimity. Their figures discovered a certain hardness of execution, when compared with the flowing contour, and elegant forms of their successors. A specimen of this high style is the Pallas of the Villa Albani, and the Niobe and her daughters of the Villa de Medici. The *fine style* is distinguished by grace. It commenced with Praxiteles, and was brought to perfection by Lyfippus and Apelles, in the reign of Alexander the Great. Of this species are the Zephyr, expressive of tranquil joy, in the act of gently waving his wings: the Leucothoe of the Capitol, and the heads upon the medals of the isle of Naxos. Other examples are, a Muse larger than life, in the Barberini Palace, and another Muse in the Pope's Gardens on the Quirinal Hill^s.

Thus is displayed to our view a prospect most delightful to every cultivated mind; for we behold Greece in her most flourishing state, adorned by

^s Winklemann, tom. ii. p. 219,

literature, arts, and sciences. The country was congenial with the disposition of its inhabitants, and their eyes were familiarised to rapid streams, craggy mountains, venerable forests, and fertile vales. Romantic objects, presented to them on all sides, waked the enthusiasm of the mind, and charmed the imagination. The Greeks, indeed, exhibited a most extraordinary scene; for at a period, when all surrounding nations were obscured by intellectual darkness, and were barbarous and unpolished, they unfolded the powers of transcendent genius. Their active minds, neither enervated by the luxuries of refinement, nor distracted by a multiplicity of objects, were exerted with ardour, and followed up many inventions with perseverance and complete success. To other countries they were doubtless indebted for some rudiments of art, science, and philosophy; but it was their peculiar glory to shape them into elegance, and methodise them into system. Egypt might present to them the figure of a sphynx, or the vast mass of a pyramid; but surely assistance like this can little abate our admiration of artists, who, from such rude specimens of architecture and sculpture, could proceed to form the temple of Minerva and the Odeum; and such statues as a Jupiter, a Venus, and an Apollo.

HOMER, the great Father of Epic song, presented in his incomparable works the most striking pictures of ancient manners, the nicest discriminations of character, and the most beautiful prospects

pects of nature^h; and yet so little indebted was he for his celebrity to those attainments which are thought essential to modern education, that it seems probable that he could neither read nor write. To the invention of a poet, he unites the feelings of a philanthropist. He celebrates the arts which sustain and adorn human life, and breathes the most lively sentiments of piety, patriotism, and social affection. As he describes those miseries of man which spring from dishonour, discord, and war, there is an air of deep solemnity diffused over his poems; and in this respect, as well as in his picture of primeval manners, there is a close affinity to the books of the Old Testament. His genius, like the Jupiter he portrays, is supreme in majesty, when compared with that of other poets; and is never exerted in a manner which harmonises so perfectly with its powers, as when he soars to the sublime. Among the numerous circumstances which may be related to his praise, it is surely not the least extraordinary, that the beauty and contrivance of his fables, the harmony of his numbers, and the various exertions of his genius, raised at once by *one mighty effort* the dignity of epic poetry to such a pitch of perfection, that almost all the merit of succeeding poets has consisted in following, without the power to overtake him.

^h B. C. 907. For a glowing passage on the genius of Homer, the source of the beauties of the tragedy, eloquence, painting, and sculpture of Greece, see Anacharsis, vol. i. p. 105.

The tragic muse gradually improved her charms, gained the full dignity of her character, and spoke the genuine language of the passions. She animated the Greeks with that original dramatic excellence, which the Romans, however fond of theatrical exhibitions, found to be unattainable.

She first enlivened the scenes of ÆSCHYLUS with wild sublimityⁱ, gave beauty and grace to the polished and energetic SOPHOCLES, and taught EURIPIDES, to breathe his pathetic and moral strains^k. Comedy amused the Athenians in its ruder state with the coarse licentiousness and broad humour of ARISTOPHANES, and in its more pleasing and elegant garb, charmed them with the chaste sentiment and diversified characters of MENANDER^l. To this admired writer, the greatest ornament of the new comedy, are ascribed no less than 105 plays. Only the titles of 73, and some short fragments, have escaped the ravages of time. The style of these precious relicks is pure and elegant, and the turn of thought is moral and serious like that of EURIPIDES, whom he is said to have imitated.

Of the lofty flights of PINDAR, the celebrated bard of Thebes, we can only judge by his few remaining *Odes*, which are said to be far inferior to his *Hymns* unfortunately lost. He celebrates the victors in the sacred games of Greece, particularly

ⁱ B. C. 485.

* B. C. 433.

^l B. C. 320.

Hiero of Syracuse and Theron of Agrigentum, and rehearſes the praises of the cities from whence they ſprang. His diction is ſtrong, his images bold, various, and vivid, his tranſitions rapid, and his ſentiments ſublime. Imitations of Pindar, except a few by Horace, Dryden, and Gray, are tame and ſpiritleſs; and are no more to be compared to his grandeur of thought, and truly poetical fervour, than pictures of the eruption of Ætna, which is a favourite ſubject of his deſcription, are to the *real* appearance of that mountain.

“Forth from whoſe nitrous caverns iſſuing riſe
Pure liquid fountains of tempeſtuous fire,
And veil in ruddy miſts the noon-day ſkies;
While wrapt in ſmoke the eddy ing flames aſpire,
Or gleaming through the night with hideous roar,
Far o’er the reddening main huge rocky fragments pour^m.”

At a much later period, THEOCRITUS a native of Sicily, deſcribed the rural manners, and romantic ſcenes, of his country in his Pastorals, which, like the roſes gliftering with the dew drops of the

^m Weſt’s Pindar.

Τας ερευγονται μεν απλα-
τα πυρε^α αγνοιαται
Εκ μυχων παγαι· ποταμοι
Δ’ αμεραισιν μεν προχεοντι ροον καπνῳ
Αιθων’ αλλ’ εν ορεφναισιν πειρας
Φοινισσα κυλινδομενα φλοξ ες βαθει-
αν φερει ποτις πλακα συν παλαγω.

Pind. Πυθια á Heyne, p. 188.

morning;

morning, are fresh from the hand of nature, and attract us with the charms of originalityⁿ, and beautiful wildness of description.

History stands eminently distinguished among the various branches of Grecian literature. The Father of Grecian history was Herodotus, a native of Halicarnassus a City in Caria, born four years before the Expedition of Xerxes into Greece. He commenced his entertaining work with an account of Cyrus the elder King of Persia, and continued it to the battle of Mycale, fought in the 8th year of Xerxes. He not only treats of the Greeks and Persians, but of other nations, the Egyptians, Assyrians, Medes, and Lydians. To the Greeks assembled at the Olympic games he rehearsed some of the most striking passages of his work; and they were received with universal applause^o. As his style flowed with the ease and sweetness of the Ionic dialect, it was so charming to the ears of his audience, that they imagined each harmonious sentence was expressed by the muses themselves. Indulging this pleasing delusion they gave the name of a muse to each of the nine Books which compose his work. The veracity of Herodotus may be depended upon whenever he speaks of circumstances which fell under his own observation; but he admitted with too much credulity the reports of others. The truth of many of his accounts has been confirmed by the observa-

ⁿ Theocritus flourished, B. C. 282.

^o B. C. 445.

tions of modern travellers, particularly with regard to those stupendous monuments of human labour the pyramids of Egypt. Various conjectures have been made to account for the purposes for which they were intended: but no one appears so probable as that of Herodotus, who informs us that they were built by the antient kings of Egypt for sepulchral monuments.

At the age of fifteen THUCYDIDES heard the recitations of Herodotus at the Olympic Games. Struck with the excellence of the composition, and overpowered by the applause bestowed upon its author, the ingenuous youth burst into tears. Herodotus congratulated Olorus the Father of Thucydides on this proof of sensibility, and exhorted him to cultivate the talents of so promising a son. His expectation was justified by the event, and the work written, not with a view to immediate popularity, but to the acquirement of lasting reputation, has conferred the greatest honour upon the name of Thucydides^p. In the history of the Peloponnesian war he introduces first a short account of the early state of Greece with respect to society and manners, and then proceeds to give a detail of twenty one years of the war in eight books, the last of which is imperfect, and is supposed to have been written by his daughter. His work is a model of authentic and accurate narrative: Every remark

^p Κλῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγομισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκρῶν. *Ξυγκρίσει.*
Lib. I. Sect. 22.

is made with the precision of a philosopher, and every description is drawn with the accuracy of a spectator. The Plague of Athens is so fully represented, and its symptoms so well described, that we seem to behold its fatal ravages. In the account of the expedition to Sicily, we seem to accompany the Athenian army to the harbour, and to set sail with the exulting fleet. His words are select, and pregnant with meaning, his manner of thinking is dignified, and his observations are sagacious and profound. As a proof of his impartiality, he nowhere expresses resentment or indignation against the party of Cleon, at whose instigation he was banished from Athens. His style is sometimes obscure, particularly in the speeches, yet through the obscurity a certain brightness appears, which like the flashes of lightning in a dark night, breaks forth and dazzles his readers.

SOCRATES, the wisest and best of heathen Philosophers, had in his youth the advantages of education from Anaxagoras, who was versed in the purest doctrines of the Ionian School, and from Prodicus the most excellent of the Sophists¹. As a soldier he signalised his valour at the siege of Potidæa, and in the course of his military career, rescued both Alcibiades and Xenophon his friends and disciples from death. In defiance of the

¹ For these accounts of Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, the author is much indebted to Enfield's Abridgment of Brucker's Philosophy.

treachery and the violence of factions, he maintained with undaunted spirit the rights of his fellow Citizens against the oppression of the thirty tyrants who governed Athens. As he professed to be inspired by his guardian spirit whom he calls his demon, he came forth as the public instructor of his Countrymen. Observing how much the minds of young men were perverted, and their principles depraved by the mercenary Sophists who taught false eloquence and specious logic, he determined to reform this pernicious mode of education. His correct and exemplary conduct prepared the way for the admission of his precepts. He was temperate in his diet, plain in his dress, placid in his behaviour, and kept his passions, which were naturally strong, under the strictest controul of reason. Thus qualified as a genuine Philosopher he considered Athens as his school, and frequented the public walks, and places of exercise to instruct all with whom he happened to converse. His select Pupils consisted of young men of the most respectable families; but indigent as he was, no solicitations could induce him to receive any reward for his instructions. He deduced the lessons of morality from the principles of natural religion, and wishing to raise the minds of his pupils above the popular superstition of his country he led them to the knowledge of the great Creator of the Universe, taught the doctrine of his over-ruling Providence, displayed the proofs of his universal goodness, and maintained the probability of a future state of rewards and punishments. While the Sophists encouraged

encouraged the pride of the understanding, he inculcated humility, as the only solid basis of wisdom. Convinced of the narrow limits of the intellectual powers, and the scanty portion of human knowledge, he declared that "all he knew was that he knew nothing." His favourite method of instruction consisted in asking a series of questions, in order to lead the person with whom he conversed to the conclusion which he had in view. Thus might his pupil deduce the truths of which his acute and inquisitive master wished to convince him from his own concessions. This is called the *Socratic* argument. His conversation was sometimes ironical, sometimes serious; but never acrimonious, or malevolent. He valued knowledge only by its application to the duties of life, and it was a beautiful observation of Cicero, that Socrates was the first who called down Philosophy from heaven to dwell upon earth, introduced her into the public assemblies, and private retirements of men, that she might perform her noblest office of instructing them in virtue. A man so excellent was likely to excite envy, as well as to inspire veneration. Exposed first upon the Athenian stage, as an object of ridicule by Aristophanes in his Comedy of the Clouds, and afterwards accused by Anytus and Melitus, the one an envious Poet, the other a venal Rhetorician; as a corrupter of the morals of young men, and an enemy to the established religion, he was brought to a public trial. He made his defence with the boldness and the dignity of conscious innocence, and maintained,

tained, that so far from being a proper object of punishment, his endeavours to teach his countrymen the principles of virtue, had deserved a higher reward than was assigned to those who conquered in the Olympic games. A small majority of his judges unconvinced by his arguments, condemned him to die by the poison of hemlock. The closing scenes of his life were consistent with his former conduct. He nobly rejected the offer made by his Pupil Crito to procure his escape from prison, and continued to instruct his pupils, during the interval of time which passed between his sentence and its execution, upon the most important subjects. Contemplating his approaching death rather as a subject of joy than of lamentation, and looking forward to the happy state in which he should converse with the greatest heroes of antiquity, and with those who like himself had undeservedly suffered by the decision of unjust judges, he pronounced an animated discourse on a future state, and the immortality of the soul. He received the fatal cup from the hand of the executioner without change of countenance, and drank the poison with perfect composure.

Such was the end of the virtuous Socrates, whose story, said Cicero, I can never peruse without tears—He died aged 70, B. C. 396. The envy and jealousy which had caused his death, did not long remain unpunished. The news of this event excited general indignation throughout Greece. The Athenians quickly became sensible of their irreparable loss, and influ-

enced by their characteristic caprice, turned **their** vengeance upon the accusers, punished Melitus with death, and Anytus to escape the same **fate**, went into exile. For a time they suspended **all** public business, put on mourning, and erected, in one of the most frequented parts of Athens, a statue to the memory of Socrates. He left no writings, his doctrines and conduct may be best collected from the works of Plato and Xenophon; differing in their habits of thinking and **modes** of life, they agree in bearing the most honourable testimony to the wisdom, the pure manners, the active benevolence, and the useful precepts of their illustrious Master*.

PLATO, a descendant of the Legislator Solon, relinquished the pursuits of Poetry to attend the lectures of Socrates. He enlarged his observations by travelling, was instructed in the doctrines of Pythagoras upon the coasts of Magna Græcia by Philolaus, Archytas, and Eurytus, and extended his excursions to the banks of the Nile, there to learn Astronomy from Theodorus, and Metaphysics from the Priests of Egypt. On his return to Athens he established the Academy, and in that delightful retirement adorned with Temples and Statues, shaded with lofty planes, and watered by the stream of Ilissus, he gave lectures, and numbered among his scholars Dion the Syracusan Prince, Hyperides, Demosthenes, and Isocrates.

* See the fine conclusion of Xenophon's Memorabilia, lib. 4. Sect. XI. and of the Phædon of Plato, Sect. 67.

All his works except his republic, and his defence of Socrates, are composed in the lively form of dialogues. He delighted to blend the tenets of the Socratic school with the subtle refinements of the Sophists. In his philosophical researches he did not confine himself like Socrates, to "the busy haunts of Men," but gave way to the efforts of his fancy, and soared to the visionary regions of abstract ideas. He often leads us into a labyrinth of argument, where we are agreeably bewildered, and scatters around us the flowers of imagination. With a singular inconsistency he banished poets from his republic, and yet of all philosophers he is the most poetical. Some of his dialogues, it must be confessed, are more calculated to display the subtle distinction of words, and the arts of casuistry, than to inculcate useful truths: yet dignity is the characteristic of Plato, and never was there a heathen Philosopher who gave a more exalted idea of the intellectual principle of Man.

Had he left no other work than his *Phedon*, which he represents as the final discourse of Socrates, it would have been sufficient to prove the sublimity of his speculations. This dialogue combines the collected opinions of the great heathen philosophers upon the immortality of the soul. All the arguments are ingenious, and some of them are solid. The soul of Man is of a nature simple and indivisible, divine and immortal, and as it is not compounded like the body, it cannot like the body be subject to dissolution and decay. The ideas

about which it is conversant, are spiritual and incorruptible, and so is the soul itself; as life is the union of the soul with the body, death is nothing more than their separation. The souls of the philosophers, who had made a preparation for death the ruling concern of their lives, and had kept themselves unpolluted by the indulgence of their passions, depart after their decease, to the supreme, wise, and good Being, and enjoy with him an eternal existence. The souls of the wicked descend to the dreary regions of Tartarus, and there suffer punishment according to the nature and degree of their crimes.

Who is there but must admire the heathen sage, who thus proceeded by the mere guidance of Reason to such noble conclusions as to the final destiny of man? Guided by the light of nature alone, he could advance no farther than to establish reasonableness of the awful and sublime doctrine of the immortality of the soul: the certain proofs of its truth, could only be given to the world by the great Author of the Christian Religion.

XENOPHON was eminent as an historian, a Philosopher and a General. Enlightened by the instructions of Socrates, he espoused the cause of the younger Cyrus, against his Brother Artaxerxes, King of Persia, and when in that disastrous campaign the Greeks had lost their General, he conducted them across rapid rivers, through vast de-

serts, and over trackless mountains, harraffed continually by numerous assailants, and pressed by various difficulties, in safety from Babylon to the Euxine sea. On his return to Greece he joined the Army of Agesilaus King of Sparta, and fought with him against the Thebans at the battle of Cheronea. He was honoured with the friendship of this Monarch, as he had been by that of Cyrus in the Court of Sardis. The Athenians displeased with the part he had taken in the cause of that unfortunate Prince, banished him from his native country. The grateful Spartans afforded him a retreat, and allowed him to purchase an estate near Scillus, famed for the beauties of the country, and its vicinity to Olympia, where the games of Greece were celebrated. Combining the charms of fiction with the traditions of antiquity, he wrote in eight books the *Cyropædia*, or history of Cyrus the elder, and presented the model of a perfect King and a perfect Government, in an historical romance. In seven books he composed the *Anabasis*, or retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, every part of which bears the stamp of actual observation. None of his works are more conducive to his fame than the *Memorabilia* of Socrates. In the lively form of dialogue he represents his great Preceptor conversing with his pupils and friends. He seems to introduce us into his company, and we may imagine we are listening to his instructive discourses. He wrote the *Hellenica*, or history of the affairs of Greece, beginning where Thucydides had concluded his work, and embracing a period

of nearly forty years from the return of Alcibiades into Attica to the battle of Mantinea. He was the Author of various smaller pieces still extant, the Banquet of the Philosophers, the Economics, Hiero, or a discourse on Tyranny, the praise of Agesilaus, the Republic of Athens, the Republic and laws of Sparta: On Taxes, on the office of a Master of the Horse, and on Hunting.

Xenophon has conveyed to us the pure and unsophisticated doctrines of the Socratic School. His works are replete with just observations of a moral kind: his stile is simple and pure. It flows like the pellucid stream, at the bottom of which every object may be distinctly seen. It is the most perfect model of attic elegance in prose, and yet beautiful as is his stile, it is surpassed by the beauties of his sentiments. Thus, according to the pleasing mythology of his country, Venus was attired by the Graces.

ARISTOTLE, a native of Stagyra in Thrace, the most eminent Scholar of Plato, was the founder of the Peripatetic sect. He was appointed preceptor to Alexander the great, and the epistle written to him on that occasion by Philip King of Macedon, did equal honour to the Monarch and the Philosopher.

PHILIP TO ARISTOTLE.

Know that a son is born to us. We thank the Gods for bestowing this gift at a time when
Aristotle

Aristotle lives; assuring ourselves, that being educated by you he will be worthy of us, and worthy of inheriting our Kingdom."

Aristotle shared the friendship both of Philip and his Queen Olympias; and Alexander was so fully sensible of the advantages he had derived from his Tutor, as to declare, that to his father he was indebted for his life, but to Aristotle for passing that life well. During his expedition into the East he honoured Aristotle with his correspondence. This privilege he used for the promotion of his favourite studies, and in order to assist his researches into the nature of Animals, Alexander caused birds, beasts, and fishes to be sent to him. Preferring the calm pursuits of philosophy to the bustle of a camp, or the intrigues of a court, he established his School in the shady groves of the Lyceum near Athens, and his Scholars were called *Peripatetics*, from the custom of walking during their philosophical discussions. He died at the age of 63. B. C. 322.

So prolific was the invention, and indefatigable the diligence of Aristotle, that according to the authority of Diogenes Laertius he wrote 400 Treatises. Most of them have perished, but a sufficient number still remain to prove the comprehensive powers of his mind, the profundity as well as the acuteness of his understanding, the extensive researches of his industry, and the wide compass of his learning. His works may be classed under the

general heads of Logic, Physics, Metaphysics, Ethics, Politics, Rhetoric and Poetry. His greatest excellence is energy of thought, his greatest defect is obscurity, and this may be sometimes occasioned by the abstruse nature of his subjects, for he pursues his researches to the utmost extent of Metaphysical disquisition on such topics as existence, deity, mind, and matter. Some of his general propositions are difficult to be understood, for want of illustration; and some of his examples do not seem applicable to the observations which they follow. Many of his terms are peculiar to his philosophy, and this circumstance renders his frequent recourse to definitions the more necessary. His works may be compared to a deep, obscure, and rich mine. As you explore it, you must trust more to your own light, than to that held out by others, which is not strong or steady enough to prevent your losing your way, amid its various labyrinths and windings. If you persevere, you will find intermixed with some dross, and covered with thick incrustations, gold, silver, and diamonds, to recompense the labour of your search.

On his works, included under the title of *Organon* which relate to *Logic*, remarks will be made when we shall treat on that subject. They display his admirable subtlety in reducing all ideas to classes, and combining propositions in various manners to form syllogisms, with a view to the supposed discovery of truth.

His

His work on *Physics* is clothed in a veil of deep obscurity. Where his meaning can be understood, he seems to reason very absurdly; he maintains that the world is eternal, without beginning or end, and that there can be but one world. Upon subjects which fall under his consideration in his *Metaphysics* likewise, so called because they were written *after* his *Physics*, he deserted many of the sublime doctrines of Socrates and Plato,—and what does he substitute for them? Opinions which unsettle the mind upon some very important points which those Philosophers had endeavoured to establish with the most weighty arguments, from a just persuasion that they involved the complete happiness of man.

His Books on natural history are curious and interesting for the time when they were written, and have truth and nature for their foundations. They contain a series of accurate observations and inquiries. Aristotle appears to have dissected, or been present at the dissection of several animals, particularly of fishes; and he refers to his treatises on comparative anatomy, which have not escaped the ravages of time.

His *Ethics* contained in ten books, addressed to his son Nichomachus, compose a work, which for precise language, acute observation, and accurate analysis, is one of the noblest human compositions. It shows the nature of virtue, whether practical or speculative. The former consists in the habit of
what

what is good, and the latter in the due exercise of the understanding. Every virtue, whether temperance, fortitude, liberality, magnanimity, or justice, is the middle point between two extremes; one of which is vicious through excess, and the other through defect. Friendship is the ally of virtue; it consists in perfect affection between persons of the same rank;—"he best can paint it, who can feel it most." Aristotle could never have written with so much sensibility upon the subject of friendship, had he not experienced its delightful influence. Pleasures are essentially different in their kinds, and those which bring disgrace are unworthy of the name. The purest and most exalted pleasure is that which a good man derives from the performance of virtuous actions. Happiness consists either in contemplation, or action; the former arises from the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, and is superior to the latter, because the understanding is the noblest part of our nature, and the subjects upon which it is employed, are of the most sublime kind.

Aristotle, as a teacher of morality, may satisfy your judgment, but he never warms your heart. As you read his work, you assent to the truth of his propositions, but he does not rouse you to action. He shows you indeed the beauty of virtue; but it is in the abstract, not the concrete. How superior to such cold and formal morality is the ardour which the Christian revelation inspires! There is more excitement to virtuous conduct in the single parable of the

Good Samaritan, than in all the *Nicomachean*, or *the Great Morals* of Aristotle.

His treatise on ethics is introductory to his politics. In his *politics*, he states the general theory of government, the duties of governors, and the various constitutions at that time established, particularly in Lacedemon and Carthage. He exposes the defects of Plato's plan of a republic, and proposes another equally chimerical. His political opinions are not without use in the present times, as he was fully convinced of the evils resulting from democratical governments, and was a friend to monarchy, the different kinds of which he explains.

His *Rhetoric* contains an application of his logic to the art of persuasion. He founds his treatise on this just principle, that to be eloquent, a man must be a sound reasoner. In all his observations on the three kinds of eloquence, the demonstrative, the deliberative, and the judicial, the passions, the manners, and on the various kinds of style, it is difficult to decide whether he excels more in profound knowledge of his subject, or a close insight into human nature.

His treatise on *Poetry*, very imperfect as the work has come down to us, gives ample proof of his judgment and taste. His principles of criticism are founded upon the best examples of Grecian genius, as displayed in Epic poetry, tragedy, and

and comedy. He traces the history of each from its birth to its maturity, analyses them into their component parts, and fixes their comparative merits. He gives the palm of preference to the tragic muse for her power in moving the passions of fear and pity, and her sudden effect upon the mind.

The rhetoric and the poetic of Aristotle are the original codes of criticism. Additional Epic poems, orations, and plays, have indeed since been written, and the works of Virgil, Shakespeare, and Milton, have increased the subjects of judgment; but its leading principles, founded in nature and truth, and stated by Aristotle, are still the same. He must ever be regarded as the copious source of the art from which Cicero, Horace, Quintilian, Boileau, and Pope, have derived much of their streams.

The liberty of Greece gave full scope to the efforts of public speakers. The Athenians were gratified with listening to the orations of the artful Lyfias, the bold Demades, the empaffioned Hyperides, the severe Lycurgus, and the learned Æschines. But the palm of eloquence, thus contended for by his countrymen, is justly assigned to DEMOSTHENES^s. Severe and majestic energy is the characteristic of his sentiments and language. While he roused his slothful and dilatory country-

^s Demosthenes, B. C. 339.

men to check the advances, and revenge the aggressions, of Philip of Macedon, who was both a crafty and powerful enemy, his orations equally proved their degenerate manners, and his own sublime genius. And what must have been the commanding power of his *delivery*, to which even Æschynes, his great and able rival, according to his own candid acknowledgment, could not do justice ! The energy of his manner, the modulation of his voice, and the dignity of his action, corresponded with the force and the compass of his reasoning, and combined to form the orator, to whom is deservedly assigned the foremost place in the records of eloquence.

To the Greeks we owe the improvement, if not the invention of grammar, logic, criticism, metaphysics, music, geometry, medicine, and astronomy ; and many of the terms peculiar to each of these arts and sciences, which are adopted in modern languages, clearly point out the country from which they are derived. The refined invention of architects embellished their cities with those regular, well-proportioned, and elegant buildings, which displayed the various forms of the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian orders. Athens was filled with temples, theatres, porticos, and vestibules, of matchless symmetry and grandeur ; and the pencils of Zeuxis, Parrhasius, and Polygnotus ; and the chisels of Alcamenes, Phideas, and Polyclétus, decorated them with the most beautiful pictures, busts, and statues. These artists ani-

mated

mated the Parian marble, and gave spirit and passion to the glowing canvass. The pagan religion was peculiarly favourable to their exertions, and the sacrifices, assemblies, and processions, were equally well adapted to painting and sculpture. The continual view of the human figure in the baths, and at the public games, familiarised them to the contemplation of forms the most elegant, and attitudes the most graceful. They copied the fairest appearances of nature, and by combining the scattered beauties of various persons in one subject, gave no very inadequate representation of that ideal excellence, which filled their refined imaginations. Theirs likewise was that exquisite judgment, the companion of genius, which instantly selecting from art or nature whatever was excellent, gave to their works an irresistible charm. Such indeed was the general prevalence of taste, that even the common people of Athens, by constantly surveying the finest specimens of painting and sculpture, and hearing the most finished compositions recited in the theatres, and public assemblies, became qualified to appreciate, with correctness, the various productions of their countrymen.

CHAPTER VII.

The Subject continued.

THE preceding digression can require no apology, as the Philosophy, the Literature, and the Arts of the Greeks in their meridian glory are the subjects of it. We return to the account of their history by noticing the particulars of the Peloponnesian war. Its immediate cause was the part which the Athenians took in the quarrel between the people of Corcyra and the Corinthians, who had founded the colony there. The Corinthians complained of this interference, not only as a breach of the treaty then subsisting between Athens and Sparta, but as the infringement of a general rule, that no foreign power ought to interfere between a colony and its mother country. The Spartans were apprehensive that the Athenians, who had made encroachments not only upon the Corinthians but the Megareans, would extend their sovereignty over all Peloponnesus. Deputies from Athens to the public assembly at Sparta, endeavoured to palliate, but could not justify, the conduct of their countrymen. Pericles, who at that time ruled Athens with supreme sway, imputed insidious designs to Sparta, and exhorted the Athenians to maintain their preeminence over the states of Greece, a preeminence which

which they merited for having stood foremost in the ranks of danger, when Greece was threatened with the yoke of Persia. He drew a flattering picture of their superior resources, contrasted the riches of Athens with the poverty of Sparta, described their great maritime power, and flattered them with complete success in the event of a war. The Spartans lost no time in commencing hostilities, and making an irruption into Attica; and the Athenian fleets retaliated by ravaging the shores of Peloponnesus. In the second year of the war, Athens was afflicted by a pestilential fever, which defied the skill of physicians, and the application of remedies^t. So depressed was the public mind by the numbers that fell victims to this calamity, that overtures of peace were made; but as the Athenians became humble, their enemies rose in their demands, and the negociation failed. Alcibiades, then conspicuous upon the theatre of public life, persuaded the Athenians to assist the states of Sicily against the tyrannical power of Syracuse. To accomplish this object, the most splendid and powerful fleet that ever left the harbour of Athens sailed to the coast of Syracuse. Becoming unpopular for want of success, Alcibiades was condemned to death, and not venturing to confront his accusers, he deserted to the Spartans. By his advice they sent a reinforcement to the Syracusans, and the storm of their

^t The Poets have shewn their approbation of the affecting description of the plague of Athens, by adopting many of its circumstances into similar descriptions. Lucretius, Book vi. ver. 1136, &c. Virgil Georg. iii. ver. 478, and Æneid iii. ver. 137.

united vengeance fell heavy upon the Athenians; not a single ship returned home, and very few of their soldiers or sailors escaped slavery or death. For a detail of these events, we are indebted to Thucydides, who holding the rank of a General at the beginning of the war, was himself an eye-witness of many of the transactions he has related. To his nervous descriptions he has added specimens of the abilities of the distinguished orators, and particularly of Pericles. The oration he pronounced in praise of those soldiers, who had fallen in the battles of their country, and were on that account honoured with a public funeral, is a model of eloquence, and for noble and appropriate sentiments conveyed with energy peculiar to the Greek language, it is scarcely, if at all, to be equalled.

Pericles appears to have been a person of pre-eminent abilities as a General, a Statesman, and an Orator. He was never defeated in battle, and yet he never obtained a brilliant victory. It was his anxious endeavour to avoid the unnecessary sacrifice of the lives of his soldiers, and scarcely any general ever obtained so many trophies with so little bloodshed. The irresistible force of thunder, and the vivid flashes of lightning, were the figurative allusions used by his contemporaries to convey ideas expressive of his eloquence. His talents raised him to the administration of public affairs, and he ruled a capricious people for fifteen years. The engine of his popularity was corruption; with the public money,

originally appropriated to the defence of Attica, he defrayed the expences of the theatres, that the people might obtain a gratuitous admiffion; and he allowed to each of them a donation for attending the public affemblies. This allowance was authorifed by an exprefs law, which proved that they were as willing to be corrupted as he was to corrupt them. With a firm mind he endured the viciffitudes of popular opinion, when they deprived him of his military command, and foon after reftored him to it again; and he bore with fortitude the lofs of his friends and children by the plague. He died foon after the commencement of the war with Sparta, a victim to the fame malady; but not before the Athenian arms had been fuccefsful againft Potidæa. In his dying hour he expreffed his fatisfaction, that he never had caufed a fellow-citizen to wear mourning; a glorious fubject of congratulation in a turbulent commonwealth, wherein private affaffinations and public executions were often reforted to, as the means of obtaining power. Exclusive of other confiderations, the encouragement he gave to the arts would have been alone fufficient to perpetuate his fame, as the age of Pericles denotes the period of their con-fummate excellence, and unrivalled fplendour.

The war of Peloponnesus continued for twenty-seven years, and its conclufion was fatal not only to the glory, but the independence of the Athenians. Their fleet was defeated at Ægos Potamos by Lyfander, and Athens was blockaded both by
fea

sea and land. The terms of peace were politic, but severe and degrading, as the Athenians were compelled to demolish their harbour, the expence of which had been defrayed by the spoils taken from the Persians; their fleet was limited to twelve ships, and they were bound to undertake no military enterprize without the approbation of the Spartans". Lyfander abolished the popular form of government, and appointed thirty tyrants, vested with absolute power. Thraſybulus, with a small band of friends, effected their expulsion, and received an olive crown as the sole reward of his patriotism. While Athens was again rising to distinction, the Thebans became conspicuous for their noble exertions: they expelled the Spartan faction, which had usurped their government, and under the conduct of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, generals as eminent for social virtues as for military talents, overcame the Spartans at the battle of Leuctra. The subsequent victory of Mantinea was dearly purchased by the death of Epaminondas, with whom their glory expired^w.

Nor did Athens or Sparta long enjoy their liberties; for Philip of Macedon obtained the sovereign command of Greece no less by intrigues and corruption, than by his prowess in the field. He engaged the venal orators, among whom was Æschines, the rival of Demosthenes, to promote his measures in the assemblies of Athens; and its in-

^u B. C. 405.^w B. C. 363.

ternal dissensions contributed to promote his projects. Demosthenes laboured to rouse his countrymen to a sense of their danger, and tried every argument which ingenuity could dictate and energy could enforce, to induce them to repel the encroachments of this crafty and bold invader. But his efforts were ineffectual; Philip was victorious at the battle of Cheronea, and all Greece was subjected to his sway. Moderate in his use of victory, he allowed the Greeks the exercise of their respective laws, and communicated to their assembled deputies his project for the invasion of Persia. He was appointed commander of all their forces; and while preparing for this great expedition, he was, from motives of personal resentment, assassinated by one of his captains.

Great changes had taken place in the manners of the Athenians; and prepared the way for the conquests of Philip. When, as Xenophon remarked, it was customary to fill their tables with the costly viands of Sicily, and Asia Minor, the luxury of feasts became fatal to the manners of the people. Private extravagance kept pace with public profusion: instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the dainties of distant coasts, which were served up with all the refinements of culinary art. In summer, the delicious wines of Cyprus were cooled with snow; and in winter, garlands of flowers, procured at great expence, adorned

adorned the tables and encircled the heads of this luxuriant people. The martial songs of their ancestors became unfashionable; and the houses of the opulent were frequented by parasites, dancers, and buffoons. An excessive fondness for horses, and the pursuits of the chase, exhausted the finances of the youths, who were vitiated by their intercourse with harlots, and corrupted by the licentious opinions of sophists. The public revenues, formerly expended in the equipment of fleets and armies, were lavished upon theatrical exhibitions, games, and festivals. Frivolous curiosity and apathy became the characteristics of a people whom no sense of danger or shame could rouse to martial exertions, even when their enemies were stripping them of their most valuable territories, and advancing with rapid steps to their gates.

The death of Philip tempted the Athenians to throw off the Macedonian yoke*. Alexander the Great ascended the throne at twenty years of age, and soon displayed his alacrity in subduing, and his clemency in pardoning the revolted states of Greece. Eager to pursue the ambitious projects of his father with regard to Persia, he obtained the command of the Grecian confederacy, crossed the Hellespont at the head of thirty-five thousand men, and in three successive battles on the banks of the Granicus, near the city of Issus, and at Arbela, completely routed the vast armies of the Persians, with

* B. C. 335.

great slaughter. The hardy Greeks composing his impenetrable Phalanx shared all his dangers, and secured his success. After the last battle, Darius was compelled to fly from province to province; betrayed at length by Bessus, one of his satraps, he was murdered; and the whole Persian empire, which had continued for two hundred years from the time of Cyrus the Great, was compelled to submit to the conqueror^y. The daring youth, inflamed with insatiable ambition, carried his arms into India, and penetrated to the banks of the Ganges. His troops, however, seeing no end to their toils, refused to continue their march. Mortified at this check to his career, he marched his army across the desert to Persepolis, and there gave himself up to luxury and intoxication. He returned to Babylon, and there died, as was suspected, by poison, or rather a victim to his excesses, in the thirty-third year of his age^z.

This great and accomplished hero was educated by Aristotle. To his care he was, from his infancy, committed by his father; and the cultivated mind of the pupil reflected the greatest honour on the diligence of the tutor. He was distinguished by a love of literature and the arts. He patronised Lyfippus, an eminent sculptor, and Apelles, the greatest painter of his age. He preserved a copy of his favourite Homer in a rich casket found among the spoils of Darius.

^y B. C. 330.^z B. C. 324.

The most opposite extremes were united in his character: his passions were violent, and his temper uncontroulable; yet how faithful and ardent was his friendship for Hephæstion, and what a scene of generosity, and even of affection, was exhibited in the tent of Darius, after the battle of the Issus, when he treated the mother, the wife, and the family of that unhappy Prince, as his own relatives, rather than as captives. In the course of his expeditions, he built twenty cities; and Alexandria, in Egypt, which afterwards became the centre of eastern commerce, still exists as a monument of his name and his extensive conquests. His race of glory was indeed short, but he outstripped all other heroes in his success, as well as his enterprises. His character, above all others in antient profane history, is calculated to excite esteem and admiration. His life, written by Quintus Curtius, has the air of a Romance; yet the most authentic accounts are sufficient to prove that his excellent understanding, his patronage of the arts, his personal strength and courage, his military talents, his unbounded ambition, and his rapid and extensive conquests, rank him among the most extraordinary personages recorded in the annals of the world.

After the death of Alexander the Great, the History of Greece ceases to be interesting. The Achæan league was formed to secure the freedom of the smaller against the encroachments of the larger states. Aratus of Sicyon, exasperated at the opposition of the Spartans to his project of

liberating Greece from the government of Macedon, courted the protection of that country, and rivetted the chains he had at first determined to break. The Romans conquered Macedon; Paulus Æmilus led Perseus, its last king, in triumph; and they proceeded, partly by artifice and partly by arms, to gain the dominion of Greece, and enrolled it in the list of their tributary provinces, under the name of Achaia. Submissive and even obsequious as she was, Greece obtained a distinction which placed her far above all other conquered countries, for she could boast of refining her conquerors, and introducing a taste for elegant literature and the arts, among the unpolished warriors of Latium.

During the civil wars of Rome^a, the Athenians, actuated by their ancient love of liberty, espoused the cause of Pompey, and afterwards of Brutus and Cassius. They experienced the clemency of Julius Cæsar, and the liberality of Antony, who was gratified by being called an admirer of the Greeks. About this time Athens was frequented as an university by the Roman youths. Here Horace completed his education, and to this place Cicero sent his son to be instructed by Cratippus, an eminent Stoic Philosopher; and here likewise Pomponius, his accomplished and virtuous friend, resided, and from that circumstance, and his pro-

^a B. C. 50.

ficiency in Grecian literature, obtained the honourable appellation of *Atticus*.

When St. Paul preached the gospel at Athens, he found it still frequented by philosophers of different sects, and well understanding the character of the people, he adapted his eloquent discourse to their love of novelty, and their taste for poetry. They found in the Emperor Adrian a generous benefactor; he bestowed upon them new privileges; and the city under his patronage reflected a faint ray of her former glory. It continued to be the favourite abode of philosophers; and when Synesius of Alexandria, an elegant writer of the fifth century, visited it, he remarked, that the celebrated colonnade or porch, from which the Stoic philosophers had taken their name, had been stripped of its elegant pictures, and was deserted by the followers of Zeno.

Alaric, the leader of the Goths, when they revolted from the Emperor Arcadius, A. C. 395, began his conquests by the invasion of Greece. He passed the straits of Thermopylæ, from which the Greeks were ordered to retire without opposing him. He marked his march through Phocis and Bœotia with ruin and fire. As soon as the voice of his herald was heard at Athens, the gates were instantly opened, and the timid inhabitants delivered up their wealth, as a ransom for their city. Corinth, Argos, and Sparta, yielded to the barbarians; and their inhabitants, loaded with chains, beheld the
slavery

slavery of their families, and the conflagration of their cities. When we remark such instances of the change of fortune, and of manners, we may ask whether we are still perusing the history of Greece? Could men so pusillanimous, be the descendants of those heroes who, devoting themselves to the honour and independence of their country, conquered at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea? Much as we may wonder at, and regret their degeneracy, the authentic records of history forbid us to doubt the fact. The events of the subsequent times are barren and uninteresting. In the fifteenth century, Greece yielded to the victorious arms of Mahomet the second, and continues in possession of the Turks at this day.

I. *The present State of Greece.*

The ravages of successive conquerors have assisted the slow but certain hand of time in hastening the destruction of ancient Athens. The Turks have exerted a wanton industry, and shown the natural hostility of ignorance to taste, by mutilating statues, demolishing temples, and defacing the elegant forms of sculpture. The curious traveller; however, has still sufficient scope for the indulgence of his pleasing melancholy, and for giving way to those mixed sensations of sorrow and delight, for which no language can supply an adequate name. Such are his feelings when his imagination presents to him the Genius of ancient Greece, bound in the
iron

iron fetters of despotism, reclining his head amidst broken walls and prostrate columns, while liberty, the muses, and the arts, are speeding their flight from these unhappy regions. On an actual survey of the ruins of Athens, the traveller may be surprised that the sight of such objects did not open the eyes of the barbarian conquerors to admire the beauties of architecture. Every colonade, portico and pillar he beholds, nay, every step he takes, cannot fail to carry back his fancy, without any violent effort to distant periods, and lead him to combine remote events with present appearances. On the steep and craggy rock of the Acropolis was erected the Parthenon, a magnificent temple dedicated to Minerva, famed for the statue, which was one of the choicest productions of Phidias. The temple is now imperfectly represented only by huge masses of marble. From this spot may be distinctly seen, when the sun gilds the horizon with his evening rays, the white column erected to commemorate the battle of Salamis. The Piræus, the renowned port of Athens, to which the triumphant fleet of Themistocles returned with the spoils of the Persians, is now distinguished only by the traces of a small theatre, and a monastery of mean architecture. The ruins of temples and theatres, intermixed with cottages, and marble tablets inscribed with characters, which neither the ignorant Turks nor the modern Greeks can decipher, are memorials of a more noble and a more refined people. The marble fragments found among the ruins of the schools attest the diligence of the ancient philosophers,

phers, who inscribed upon them the names of their scholars. The odeum of Pericles, which once resounded with the notes of the lyre, and the sublime strains of the choral song, can at present be traced only by its lofty and broken wall, and is deformed by the rude outwork of a Turkish castle^b. The shores of Attica are waste and desolate; few villages are to be seen from Eleufis to the promontory of Sunium, and thence even to the plains of Marathon. The eye of the traveller discerns nothing but scattered ruins along a coast of eighty miles in extent.

Every man of classical taste feels a melancholy pleasure in forming this contrast, which he is enabled to make in consequence of the diligent researches of Wheeler, Spon, and Chandler. But he may receive a more lively satisfaction from the researches of Stuart, who from fragments of buildings and broken pillars has traced such plans and elevations of the original buildings, and explained them so clearly in three splendid volumes, as to give a very expressive representation of the city in its ancient state of elegance and grandeur.

However the inhabitants of Athens are depressed by their tyrants, they still retain marks of their original character. They possess much of that quickness of apprehension, vivacity of temper and urbanity of manners, which distinguished their ancestors. The native character of

^b Chandler's Travels, p. 78, 85, &c.

the people long continues like the peculiarity of the soil, which is the same as it was of old ; Attica is still famed for olives, grapes, and figs ; and the neighbouring slopes of Mount Hymettus still abound with bees, which produce most delicious honey. But a long state of servitude and superstition has degraded the native powers of their minds ; and the recollection or the fear of blows and indignities, often inflicted by their tyrants, makes them stoop to the artifices of cunning and dissimulation^c. The Albanians, a hardy and courageous race, who keep flocks upon the purple declivities of Hymettus and Cytheron, or gather olives on the green banks of the Cephissus, are descended from the Spartans.

^c From an animated vindication of the character of his countrymen from the charge of stupidity and want of spirit, see the eloquent address of the learned Dr. Coray in the Discours Préliminaire to his Translation of Hippocrates. The conclusion of it is so animated, and written so much in the spirit of a countryman of Homer, that I cannot withhold from my Reader the pleasure of perusing it.

“ Des despotes transplantés de l'ancienne Rome, après avoir par une administration aussi stupide que tyrannique relâché tous les ressorts de la société, entravé l'influence du plus beau des climats, souillé, ébranlé leur trône par les crimes les plus affreux, ont fini par vous livrer à des tyrans, encore plus stupides et plus féroces. Ce sont eux qui ont forgé des chaînes que vous portez, nation malheureuse, mais respectable dans votre malheur ! Ce sera vous qui les briserez. En attendant cet heureux moment, qui sans doute n'est pas éloigné, vous pouvez avec confiance adresser à vos tyrans ce qu'un de nos poètes fait dire à la vigne rongée par un animal dévastateur,

Κην με φλγης επι ριζαν, όμως επι καρποφορησω,
 “Οσσον επισπεισαι σοι, τραγε, θυομενω.” P. 180.

Their patience of fatigue, and their desperate bravery, which has been sometimes roused by extreme oppression, prove the justness of their pretensions to such an origin. When we observe that the sparks of original genius and courage are still extant among this people, it must excite a wish, that captives so undeserving and unfortunate, could be assisted to break their chains; and not only be permitted to enjoy the delightful country of their ancestors, without slavery or oppression of any kind, but have every encouragement to follow their example. Far from being admitted to any privileges whatever, they are kept in the most abject servitude, and continue in the same miserable state as when they were first conquered. They retain the same right they ever had to shake off the Turkish yoke, and to assert their claims to independence. The wars between the Russians and the Turks might afford them a glorious opportunity of emancipation; and few projects could be more worthy of the Emperor who now fills the throne of Russia, than to assist their courageous efforts in a manner more vigorous and effectual, than was done in the late war between Catherine the great and the Turks. The fate of the brave inhabitants of Poland extinguishes the hope of restoration to complete independence from that quarter: but the government of Peterburgh would doubtless be more tolerable than that of the Porte, if we consider the different spirit of its religious creed, and its more advanced state of civilization. If the modern Greeks could be placed in so advantageous a situation, the arts, which

which have civilized northern Europe, after having taken an extensive circuit, might once more return to enlighten and adorn the country of their birth. The following prediction of Peter the Great of Russia, might then be verified, and Russia be rewarded for her emancipation of the Greeks, by the improvements derived from their literature and arts.

“ I cannot better compare the transmigration of science than to the circulation of blood in the human body ; and I foresee that they will one time or other forsake England, France, and Germany, and settle among us for many ages, to return again into Greece, their first abode ^d.”

For the assistance of the memory in chronological arrangements we may distinguish the remarkable periods of Grecian history by *five* memorable eras. The first is the age of *Lycurgus*, or the establishment of the Spartan constitution, B. C. 884. The second is the age of *Solon*, or the establishment of the Athenian constitution, B. C. 594. The third is the age of *Themistocles* and *Aristides*, or of military glory, B. C. 480. The fourth of *Pericles*, or of the arts, B. C. 430. The fifth, of degradation, when *Alaric* overran Greece without opposition, A. D. 395.

^d From the Speech of the Czar Peter, *Memoirs of Literature*, vol. i. p. 361.

On looking back to one particular period of this history, when in the short space of little more than a century such statesmen, warriors, orators, philosophers, historians, poets, painters, sculptors, and architects flourished, we must be induced to think that Providence intended to display a glorious and ever memorable example of the eminence which the human mind could actually reach, when fostered by liberty and stimulated by emulation, it exerted its full powers. And when we consider the influence of this example in succeeding times, we cannot fail to acknowledge the obligations which ancient Rome and modern Europe have been under to Greece. To her indeed all polished nations are indebted for holding out the light of genius, philosophy, and taste, to guide their steps.

Emulation was the great incentive to exertion in every branch of art, and every scene of action. The trophies of Miltiades did not suffer Themistocles to sleep; and the applause bestowed upon Herodotus at the Olympic games prompted Thucydides to compose his immortal work. The efforts of genius are not confined to servile imitation, for genius may strike into innumerable paths. The Greeks have shewn us that excellence even of the highest order is attainable; and it remains for us, if we are animated by ambition, and impelled by a spirit of enterprise like theirs, to make repeated and unremitting exertions, until our endeavours terminate

minate as theirs did, in such success as to command the admiration of the world.

The history we have been considering cannot fail to suggest to the English reader various points of resemblance to the state and circumstances of his own country. The struggles for power, and the intrigues of parties and popular leaders, the ardent love of liberty, and high pretensions to domination, occasionally sinking, and then again rising from tame acquiescence to new claims, new jealousies, the most active exertions of power, and the most strenuous vindication of rights ;—the tendencies of the state to great accession of empire, and the obstacles to a continuance of distant and widely spread dominion ;—the gradual increase of power and opulence from sources of commerce ; the consequent prevalence of dissipation, and luxury, tending to dissolve the very strength and prosperity they produced—these circumstances, connected with the political career of a free government, and the concerns of a commercial and maritime country, are no where more fully displayed than in the history of Athens.

The more exact resemblance between *Athens* and *Great Britain* is discernible in our diligent cultivation of the arts and sciences, in the eloquence of our public speakers, the bravery of our sailors, and the skill and valour of our admirals and generals. While we are eager to establish this resemblance, so flattering to our national pride ;

and whilst our Island reflects the image of the literature, architecture, sculpture, and taste, which so eminently distinguished the Greeks; and we surpass them in navigation, commerce, science, and philosophy; let us be extremely careful, that our characters and manners have no mixture of the factious spirit, levity, corruption, and degeneracy, which marked the decline of their glory; but that we emulate the virtue, valour, patriotism, and refinement of their GREATEST MEN, and PUREST TIMES.

CHAPTER VIII.

The History of Rome.

WITH respect to the eminent character and the political importance of the Romans, their history is more splendid than that of any other country. Like the sculptured column of Trajan, it is a monument of triumphs. It is not broken into so many parts as that of Greece, displays greater vicissitudes of affairs, and records the lives of an equal, if not a greater number of illustrious warriors and statesmen. The Romans established their empire not so much by the smiles of fortune, as by the persevering efforts of wisdom and valour. They were extraordinary both in the nobleness and in the debasement of their character; for in their progress to dominion, they exercised virtues which far exceeded, and in the decline of their empire, they were disgraced with vices, which fell much below the common standard of human nature^e.

The prospect of Rome, at the period of its greatest power, cannot fail to impress our minds

^e The authorities for my statements in these chapters on the History of Rome, may be found in Livy, Tacitus, Polybius, Ferguson's Roman Republic, Montesquieu sur la decadence de l'Empire Romain, Gibbon, &c. &c.

with astonishment. At the time when the virtuous and warlike TRAJAN filled the imperial throne, the Romans had reached the summit of dominion and magnificence. The metropolis of the empire and its suburbs extending beyond the seven celebrated hills, were bounded by a circumference of fifty miles. More populous than Babylon, Nineveh, or Thebes, or any capital of modern Europe, the number of its inhabitants amounted to twelve hundred thousand^f. It abounded with mansions remarkable for height and spaciousness; it was interspersed with gardens and groves, and was decorated with every edifice, which could contribute either to the use or ornament of individuals, or of the public. Temples, palaces, amphitheatres, fountains, baths, aqueducts, bridges, markets, obelisks, squares, courts of justice, and porticos, filled the august prospect. The temple of Ops was enriched with the gold of subdued monarchs; the rostra were decked with the naval spoils of a long succession of ages; and upon the lofty arches were described in the most exquisite sculpture, the various victories and splendid

^f Upon the subject of the extent and the population of Rome there is a very excellent note in Brotier's Tacitus, vol. ii. p. 473. 4to. edit. He states at large the data, upon which his calculation of the inhabitants proceeds. There is a curious dissertation upon this subject in the *Memoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, tom. xxx. p. 191. by D'Anville. The only capital in the known world more populous than ancient Rome is Pekin in China, which according to Du Halde contains three millions of inhabitants.

triumphs of the conquerors of the world. Among the public buildings were more particularly observed by the astonished spectator, the elegant forum of Trajan, the ample theatres of Marcellus and Pompey, the temple of Neptune, the wide circumference of the Circus Maximus, the Capitol rearing its majestic structures above the Tarpeian Rock; the imperial Palace, from the magnificent portico of which the Emperor could overlook the whole city; the temple of Apollo, distinguished by the colossal statue of that deity, erected upon the Palatine Hill in the centre of the city; and the dome of the sublime Pantheon, eminent for its incomparable symmetry, and regular proportions. All these buildings presented either the solid style of the Tuscan, or the more elegant orders of Grecian architecture, and were adorned with the most beautiful productions of painting and sculpture. Above these stately edifices arose a lofty pillar of white marble, exhibiting, in the most lively images of sculpture, the Dacian victories of Trajan, whose colossal figure crowned the summit. The extent, the variety, and the grandeur of these buildings proved, that this city was the residence of the masters of the world; as the ingenuity, the productions, the arts, and the riches of all countries conspired to aggrandize and embellish it.

Twenty thousand select troops, either distinguished as regular patrols, or prætorian cohorts, watched both night and day over the security of

this populous and spacious city. To this seat of supreme power ambassadors were sent from the most remote regions, to lay the diadems of Kings at the feet of the Emperor. From hence marched the proconsuls, lieutenants, and prætors, surrounded by numerous trains of attendants, and escorted by cohorts of foot and squadrons of horse, to take the command of their respective provinces. They travelled over straight and spacious roads, which intersected the empire in every direction, and which were so solid and durable, as to remain in many places unimpaired by the ravages of time, after the lapse of more than seventeen centuries. The ready communication between one province and another was equally secured by sea and by land; and the fleets which anchored in the ports of Ostia, Ravenna and Misenum, were prepared to carry the imperial arms to the most distant coasts. Upon the banks of great rivers, such as the Rhine, and the Danube, in the vicinity of populous cities, or on the frontiers of hostile nations, were stationed the camps of the legions. At the first alarm of insurrection they were ready to take the field; no plot of the enemy could escape their vigilance, and no force was sufficient to repel their formidable onset. Many of the temperate and fertile countries, which now compose the most powerful kingdoms of Europe, were enrolled in the register of tributary states. The imperial eagle stretched her wings over the fairest portions of the ancient world. The empire was extended more than two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus

ninus in Britain, and the northern limits of Dacia, to Mount Atlas in the west of Africa, and reached in length more than three thousand miles, from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was supposed to contain above sixteen hundred thousand square miles of land, for the most part fertile and cultivated. In addition to Italy, it comprehended Gaul, Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, Portugal, Illyricum, Macedonia, Achaia, Cilicia, Pontus, Syria, Bithynia, Cyprus, Cyrenaica, Numidia and Mauritania. To these countries, which were acquired by the time Octavius had gained the battle of Actium, were afterwards added Rhætia, Noricum, Pannonia, Mæsia, Dacia, Britain, Ægypt, Cappadocia, Galatia, Lycia, Comagene, Judea, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Assyria^g. Most of these countries abounded with large and opulent cities, every one of which attested the progress and influence of the arts, as well as the dominion of the Romans, by the grandeur and variety of its public works. The population of the empire was equal to its extent, as it was reputed to contain not less than one hundred and twenty millions of subjects, a number far greater than was ever, either before or after that period, united under one European government.

If we consider the Modern World with reference to the Roman empire, even the dominions of the great Mogul, or the more extensive territories or

^g Sigonius de Antiquo Jure Provinciarum, p. 266.

the Grand Signior, far as they are spread in Europe, Asia, and Africa, sink in comparison with it. Russia in point of comparative population is a desert; and China, with its myriads of inhabitants, with respect to martial energy, is a nation of effeminate slaves.

Such is the sublime prospect of the metropolis, the naval and military force, and the extensive and formidable sovereignty of ancient Rome in the meridian of her glory. A survey so remarkable for the variety and the splendour of its objects, is the most distinguished, which history presented to us. It will appear the more extraordinary, if we contrast the empire so extensive and flourishing under Trajan, with its parent state, consisting of a small colony of shepherds and adventurers, originally planted by Romulus upon the banks of the Tiber, and forming one of the forty seven independent states of Latium, which altogether occupied a territory of fifty miles in length, and sixteen in breadth ^h.

By comparing the most exalted state of Rome with its origin, we are naturally led to inquire into the causes of its grandeur. From considering its fall from such an elevation of power, when the Imperial city was taken by the Goths, we are naturally led to investigate the causes of its decline.

^h B. C. 753.

These inquiries will form the subjects of this and the following chapter.

The leading causes of the greatness of the Roman power were,

- I. The peculiar constitution of the government.
- II. The improvement of the arts of war.
- III. The strong attachment to religion.
- IV. The active spirit of patriotism.

These causes operating upon the opinions and determining the conduct of a hardy, active, and courageous people, conspired to raise them to the summit of empire.

Rome is said to have been founded by Romulus 752 years before Christ. His subjects composed of shepherds and adventurers, collected from the neighbouring country, were early disgraced by an act of violence: They peopled their new residence by carrying off the wives and daughters of the Sabines. A reconciliation however took place, and was rendered more complete by Numa the second King, who was himself a Sabine. There were seven Kings of Rome, viz. Romulus, Numa, Tullius Hostilius, Ancus Martius, Tarquinius Priscus, Servius Tullius, and Tarquinius Superbus. The regal Government continued 244 years, which allows nearly 35 years to each reign, a long period, particularly when it be considered that some

some of the kings died by violent deaths, and one of them was deposed.

If the Romans had tamely submitted to the tyranny of Tarquinius Superbus, their spirit would have been completely broken by continued servility, and their city would have remained without distinction among the small states of Latium. Tarquin courted the approbation of the lower orders of his subjects, to depress by their means the power of the higher: but by his insolence and cruelty he first exposed himself to the hatred, and afterwards to the indignation of all his subjects. The rape of Lucretia by Sextus his son brought his reign to a crisis. This beautiful lady, unable to survive her dishonour, stabbed herself in the presence of her husband Collatinus, and his relations. They roused the vengeance of the people, Tarquin was expelled, and the regal government was abolishedⁱ. By this revolution a new spring was given to the exertions of the Roman people, and they began to display such energy of character, as afterwards rendered them great, formidable, and illustrious. They felt the necessity of governors, laws, and discipline, but of such governors, laws, and discipline, as were favourable to the darling objects of their pursuits, the love of freedom, and the acquisition of power.

ⁱ B. C. 509.

The Roman form of government then became republican, and its executive and legislative branches consisted principally of the Consuls, the Senate, the Comitia or Assembly of the People, and the Tribunes. The name of *Consul* seemed to imply rather a Counsellor than an active Magistrate, but the real authority of the Consul was very great. The two Consuls were the Generals of the forces; they could raise armies, and nominate officers; they presided in the Senate, and could convene or dismiss it at pleasure. The only material distinction between the consular and the regal power was, that the former was limited to one year. The *Senate*, so called from the advanced age of the members who composed it, was a deliberative council: under Romulus it consisted of an hundred members, but was by Tarquinius Priscus increased to three hundred. They were at first chosen by the Consuls from the body of the Patricians, but afterwards the Plebeians acquired an equal right to that dignity. They were the guardians of religion, superintended the conduct of all Magistrates, appointed Proconsuls to the command of the provinces, decided upon the fate of the conquered nations, had the care of the public treasures, and, when the state was in danger, could appoint a Dictator, and invest the Consuls with absolute power.

Servius Tullius, the sixth King of Rome, divided the people into six classes, and each class into centuries, so called; not as really consisting of a hundred

hundred, but as being obliged to furnish a hundred men in time of war. The first five classes were arranged according to the proportions of their property; the sixth class, which was the most numerous and the poorest, was exempt from all the taxes which the others paid. That the richer citizens might have privileges, as a compensation for bearing the burthens of the state, Servius enacted that the *Comitia*, or Assembly of the People, should give their votes by centuries, which were one hundred and ninety-three in number. The first and second classes contained one hundred and twenty of these, and if they were unanimous, a majority was secured. Thus in the *Comitia Centuriata*, in which the Chief Magistrates were elected, peace or war decreed, criminals were condemned or acquitted, the richer classes had the sole authority, and the votes of the poorer were of no effect. Such was the ingenuity of this constitution that all were satisfied with it; the rich on account of the privileges which they enjoyed, and the poor for their exemption from taxes.

By means of the *Census*, the population and wealth of the state were ascertained; all the citizens were required to declare upon oath their names, places of abode, number of children, and amount of their income. This review enabled the Censors to arrange every citizen in his proper class. The Census was closed with religious rites and sacrifices, which conclusion was called *lustrum*; and hence the word *lustrum* was used for the space of
five

five years, because at the end of that period the Census was made. There were two *Censors*; they numbered the people, inspected their conduct, and regulated their employments. So honourable was their office, that it was exercised even by Consuls and Emperors. The *Tribunes* of the People, at first five, afterwards ten in number, were chosen annually: their persons were sacred; they could annul the decrees of the Senate by their decisive *veto*, and, under pretence of measures being carried on injurious to the state, could arrest even the Consuls themselves. They had two Magistrates to assist them called *Ædiles*, who took care of the buildings of the city.

In the earliest ages of the Kings and first Consuls, the Romans had no regular body of civil laws. To remedy this great defect, Terentillus, a Tribune, proposed the appointment of ten Commissioners to frame and digest a code of laws for the security of the rights of all orders of the state. After a fruitless opposition of the Patricians to the measure, the *Decemviri* were chosen, and the laws were framed, which are known by the name of the Twelve Tables, and which are the basis of the Roman jurisprudence^k. They are celebrated by Cicero, as containing the essence of all the wisdom of the philosophers, but they were evidently calculated only for a rude and unpolished state of society. They show the severity of the Roman character, as

* B. C. 451.

they gave fathers absolute power over their sons, whom they had a right to treat precisely as slaves.

To give the Decemviri uncontrolled authority, the office of Consul was abolished. But an atrocious deed soon put an end to their tyranny. Appius Claudius, one of the Decemviri, inflamed with lawless passion for the beautiful Virginia, the betrothed wife of Icilius, a Tribune of the people, employed a profligate dependant to claim the virgin as his property, under pretence of her being the daughter of one of his female slaves. The infamous Appius confirmed the claim. Her father, to save the honour of his child, plunged a dagger into her breast; and the people, witnesses of this dreadful scene, would have sacrificed Appius to their just resentment, had he not escaped amid the tumult. Their vengeance was satisfied with the abolition of this odious magistracy, and the death of Appius, who fell by his own hands¹.

This is the second instance in which Roman revolutions owed their origin to the insults offered to women. From this cause arose the abolition of the regal office and the Decemvirate; and this cause occasioned that remarkable change, by which the Plebeians obtained a right to share the highest offices in the state with the Patricians. The younger daughter of Fabius Ambustus, married to a Plebeian, envious of the honours of her elder

¹ B. C. 449.

sister, the wife of a Patrician, stimulated her father to rouse the Plebeians to assert their rights. After great contests, candidates from their body were admitted to hold first the office of Consul, afterwards those of Censor, Prætor, and Priest.

The degree of aristocracy, which had been infused into the Roman government by Servius Tullius, gave rise to fierce and long-continued dissensions between the Patricians and Plebeians. The Patricians, recommended by their rank and high birth, as they were descended from the first senators, for some time appropriated to their own order all the great offices of the state. The Plebeians, whose means of subsistence were very scanty, were oppressed with debt, and suffered great hardships from the extortion and cruelty of their creditors. They claimed redress of their grievances, the suppression of enormous usury, the abolition of corporal punishment, and the freedom of debtors. They retired to the Mons Sacer, and not only obliged the Senate to comply with their requests, but acquired the right of choosing Magistrates from their own order, who should have the power of opposing with effect any encroachment on their interests^m. These were the *Tribunes*, and after their appointment the two parties were brought more nearly upon an equality, greater harmony prevailed at home, and the battles of the commonwealth were fought with more spirit abroad; its dominion was extended,

^m B. C. 260.

and the detached neighbouring states could no longer withstand a government rendered much more formidable by being more consolidated.

The close connexion, which subsists between the civil and military departments, strongly marked the character of the Roman people. In the enrolment of the *Census*, a plebeian was reckoned as a foot soldier, a knight as a horseman, and a legion as a detachment of the whole community. The first officers of the state were understood to command the armies of the republic by virtue of their civil magistracy. No citizen could aspire to any high offices, before he had performed military service for a certain term of years; and even in the extraordinary commissions, which were occasionally given, civil and military rank were never disjoined. The education of a soldier was the first step to all the honours of the state; and the same personal qualities, which were necessary for the General, were necessary for the Pretor or the Consul. However difficult it may appear to blend in due proportions the characters of the soldier and the citizen; yet it is evident, that in Rome the union was really effected, and became productive of the boldest determinations in the senate, and the most invincible spirit in the field.

In the transactions of affairs with foreign states, the policy of the Romans was as refined, as their conduct in the field was heroic. That this policy

was the result of regular and systematic principles, appears from the pursuit of the same measures in the early, as well as in the advanced state of the republic. Whenever occupied by an important war, the Romans dissembled injuries received from other states, till a convenient time of retaliation. As they did not always make peace with sincerity, their treaties were sometimes no more than short suspensions of hostility: and they took care to introduce into them such conditions as ultimately proved detrimental, and even destructive to their enemies. When they had conquered a powerful prince, they insisted upon his not making war upon his neighbours, under pretence of their alliance with themselves; and, by this prohibition, they in effect deprived him of the exercise of his military power. Whenever two nations were at war, although not always authorized by any alliance to interfere, they espoused the cause of the weaker party. They never commenced hostilities in a distant country, without procuring some ally near the enemy, whom they intended to attack. This measure contributed greatly to their success in their wars with Carthage. The title of ally, indeed, was sometimes no more than a splendid and specious name, under which they availed themselves of the strength and resources of other nations. So firm was their adherence to their fundamental maxim, "to spare the vanquished, and subdue the proud," that they were not to be moved by any reverses of fortune, however disastrous,

astrous, to solicit peaceⁿ. They looked with calmness upon the advances even of a victorious enemy; and, in the midst of defeats, displayed the dignity and firmness of their genuine character. They were cautious not to impose their laws upon conquered nations, as such conduct must unavoidably have produced confederacies and insurrections: on the contrary, actuated by a spirit of judicious toleration, they left to them the undisturbed exercise of their religion and laws; and only enforced such general principles of subordination, as corrected their natural ferocity of disposition, inclined them to adopt the arts and customs of their conquerors, and induced them to regard the Romans, rather as their benefactors, than their masters^o.

In the vast compass of their dominions, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Danube to the deserts of Lybia, was felt the in-

ⁿ Hæ tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

Virgil. *Æn.* VI.

^o Tacitus has informed us of the methods adopted by the politic Agricola, to soften the rugged manners of the Britons, and make them patient of the Roman yoke. “Jam vero principum filios liberalibus artibus erudire—inde etiam habitus nostri honor, et frequens toga; paulatimque discessum ad delinimenta vitiorum, porticus et balnea, et conviviorum elegantiam: idque apud imperitos *humanitas* vocabatur, cum *pars servitutis* esset.” Taciti Vita Agric. p. 426. Ed. Græv. The last words of the sentence disclose to us the refined policy of the Romans.

fluence

fluence of their laws. Colonies were planted, municipal towns were honoured with the privileges of Roman citizens, federal states enjoying their own customs and laws were civilized, and the most useful public edifices, such as bridges, aqueducts, and temples, adorned the different provinces. The wars, which had desolated neighbouring countries with incessant fury, were terminated by their superior influence; and their tributaries, united like the branches of one family, enjoyed a degree of intercourse and peace before unknown to the world. Their political conduct was frequently directed by justice, generosity, and honour; and these virtues, supported by the extent of their dominion, and the terror of their arms, diffused a blaze of glory round the Roman name, which dazzled the eyes of all nations.

In the year of Rome 556, when the Greeks were met to celebrate the Isthmian games at Corinth, a herald advanced into the middle of the amphitheatre, and having commanded silence by sound of trumpet, he proclaimed that the Roman Senate and Titus Quinctius the general, having conquered Philip, King of Macedon, restored liberty and the free exercise of their own laws, to all the provinces of Greece. So transported were the assembled multitudes with this unexpected declaration, that they could scarcely credit the testimony of their senses; and so completely did joy possess their minds at the news of this auspicious event, that they could not fix the least attention

upon the performance of the games. A soon as they were concluded, the crowds hastened to express their gratitude to the Roman general. "How happy, exclaimed they, in this transport of exultation, is it for the world, that there should exist a people who glory in expending their treasures, and enduring the hardships of war to procure the liberty of others. This people do not confine their generous exertions to the neighbouring states, but even traverse the ocean to repel injustice, and establish Religion and Law. Oppressed as we were by the yoke of a foreign tyrant, we now regain our ancient independence by the proclamation of a Roman herald. The hope of such happiness could only be the result of an aspiring mind—to realize such an expectation requires the singular favour of the Gods, and the greatest generosity of Men^p."

The destination of the Romans to war was the first principle of their original institutions; it was cultivated by their kings, and invariably pursued throughout every age of the commonwealth. It arose indeed from the nature of their situation. The subjects of Romulus made themselves obnoxious to the neighbouring states by the frequency of their predatory excursions. As such conduct subjected them not only to just retaliation, but to the severest infliction of revenge, the wars, which the Romans at first began for the

^p Livy, lib. 33. c. 32, &c.

fake of plunder, were soon continued upon principles of self-preservation: they became the objects of fear or of envy to all the surrounding people; and king after king, and state after state, came forth to crush their aspiring power. Alba looked with a jealous eye upon the prosperity of her colony, and attempted its overthrow. The Volscians, Sabines, Samnites, Latins, and Etrurians succeeded; and the Gauls attacked them with such numerous armies, as often in the early ages of the republic threatened their destruction.

The short duration of the consular government, although liable to some inconveniences, was to men of courage and talents a strong incentive to martial exploits^a. Various causes usually operate to set bounds to the ambition of monarchs. In the course of a long reign, many passions, and even indolence itself, successively rule their minds. But as the office of the chief magistrates of the republic was confined to a single year, they were impatient to signalize their short command by great and glorious achievements. The moment propitious to emulation and glory was not to be lost. They were powerfully stimulated to put a period to any war, in which they were engaged, by some rapid and

^a Livy states particularly the inconveniences with regard to military operations, which arose from the short period of the consular power. I have endeavoured to reconcile that historian with Montesquieu, with whom he is at issue upon this subject. Compare Montesquieu, *Grandeur*, c. i. with Livy, lib. xli. c. 15. lib. xxiv. c. 8. lib. ix. c. 18.

decisive measures; lest the harvest of victory and fame should be reaped by their successors^r. For the indulgence of this spirit of enterprise, the most extensive scope was afforded, by a long series of campaigns, battles, and sieges; as the temple of Janus was shut only three times during the long period of 700 years, and only once whilst Rome was subject to a consular government, at the close of the first Punic war.

II. This martial spirit, of which such plain vestiges may be traced in the early manners of the people, was matured by the strictest attention to discipline, by every encouragement to bear the labours of war, and by the invention and perfection of every expedient which could improve the arts of attack and defence^s.

Their discipline was the result of painful and long experience. Their attachment to it was equally politic and firm; for they were too acute not to discern that it was the most effectual support of their power. The military oath was administered under peculiar circumstances of solemnity. The soldier swore never to desert the

^r *Ipsūm Scipionem, expectatio successoris venturi ad paratam alterius labore ac periculo finiti belli famam, sollicitabat.* Liv. l. 30.

^s Polybius, book vi. Gibbon, vol. i. c. i. and his notes and authorities. Of the Roman discipline, castrametation, arms, marches, and martial laws, there is a very curious and distinct account in Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. c. 5.

standard,

standard, which was displayed in the front of his legion. To this he looked up as to a tutelary god, by whose guidance he was assured he should be led to victory¹.

In the spacious field of Mars, which was pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Tyber, the ardent youth were exercised in feats of manly activity: here the charioteers contended in the rapid race, and the youthful recruits were trained to hurl the spear, and manage the horse. The veterans here performed their various evolutions in toilsome review. Nothing was wanting to give this busy scene the complete appearance of a field of battle, but the effusion of blood. The soldiers were animated, not only by the presence, but the example, of their leaders. The ablest generals frequently condescended to instruct the recruits, to reward the diligent, and sometimes to dispute with them for the prize of superior dexterity or activity. The dictator, in early times, was not allowed to ride on horseback, but by an especial indulgence of the people. Julius Cæsar usually marched at the head of his troops, bareheaded, whether it rained or the sun shone. The Emperor Trajan marched likewise at the head of his legions, without ever using either horse or chariot.

¹ Tacitus expressly calls the standards—"Propria legionum numina," and "bellorum deos." Tertullian well remarks—"Religio Romanorum tota castrensis, signa veneratur, signa jurat, et omnibus diis præponit."

Their native courage had every assistance, which it could in any degree derive from manly exercises, constant practice, and habitual skill. The young soldiers were instructed to run, to leap, to swim, to carry heavy burthens, and to move to the sound of flutes in the martial dance. Their arms were heavier than those of other nations, and their dexterity in using them was the result of confirmed habit. By the management of all kinds of weapons, and by the practice of every movement, which could give additional strength and activity to the body, they were gradually trained to real action.

During the short intervals of peace, they sought amusement in hunting, or in conformity with the institutions of Romulus and Numa, were engaged in the hardy occupations of agriculture. To turn the stubborn soil, to be exposed to all the changes of weather, to subsist upon a frugal diet, and undergo every rural labour, were the best preparatives for war. In the early ages of the commonwealth, this employment was ennobled by the practice of consuls and dictators, who tilled their paternal fields with their own hands; and Curius, Fabricius, Regulus, Cincinnatus, Fabius Maximus, and other distinguished generals, were called from the plough to fill the greatest offices of state, and lead their countrymen to battle".

Agriculture

When Virgil describes the occupations of the hardy natives of Italy, with whom Æneas had to contend, he draws an exact

Agriculture was the only peaceful business which was thought worthy of a Roman citizen. The employments of trade were left to their slaves, and foreigners conveyed to Rome the produce of other countries. No encouragement was given to commerce except that which consisted in importing corn from the granaries of Sicily, Africa, and Egypt. This was carried on by foreign merchants in their own vessels for the supply of the Italian states; for notwithstanding the attention of the Romans to agriculture, the produce was so unequal to the population, that whenever the arrival of foreign corn was delayed, the people were thrown into alarm from an apprehension of famine.

The Romans looked with attention upon the warlike appointments and arms of other nations, and showed their profound judgment in quickly adopting expedients to supply their own defects.

an act picture of Roman life, in its different stages, from infancy to old age.

Durum a stirpe genus, Natos ad flumina primum

Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus & undis.

Venatu invigilant pueri, sylvasque fatigant:

Flectere ludus equos, & spicula tendere cornu.

At patiens operum, parvoque assueta Juventus,

Aut rastris terram domat, aut quatit oppida bello.

Omne ævum ferro teritur, versâque juvencûm

Terga fatigamus hastâ. Nec tarda senectus

Debilitat vires animi, mutatque vigorem.

Canitiem galeâ premimus; semperque recentes

Convectare juvat prædas, & vivere rapto.

Æneid. ix. v. 603.

They

They copied the form of the Sabine shield, and armed their troops with the Spanish sword. Horses for their cavalry were procured from Numidia; and the wreck of a Carthaginian vessel, fortunately thrown upon their coast, was the model of their first ship of war. At the beginning of the contest with Carthage, they had not a single vessel of this description; but at its close they were masters of the sea. They stationed the captured elephants, which had been employed against them in the Punic wars, in the front of their army against Philip of Macedon. The genius of such a people, so versatile and alive to improvement, seemed to form them for extensive empire; and hence it is the less extraordinary, that the ready adoption of foreign arms and inventions proved destructive to the nations which originally used them^w.

But the peculiar glory of Roman tactics arose from the formation and discipline of the legion. Agreeable to the genius of the people, it was better calculated for attack than defence. With respect to activity, it had great advantages over the Grecian and Macedonian phalanx, which was only so constructed, as to force its way by the depth and solidity of its compact and closely-wedged ranks. Under Romulus, the number of a legion consisted of 3000 foot and 300 horse soldiers: when Hannibal was in Italy, it was increased to 5000 men.

^w Αγαθοί γὰρ εἰ καὶ τινες ἕτεροι μεταλαβείν εἰδη, καὶ ζηλωσαὶ το βέλτιον, Ῥωμαῖοι. Polybius, lib. vi. sect. 20, 21, 24. edit. Gronov.

Each legion was divided into ten cohortes, each cohorts into three manipuli, and each manipulus into three ordines, or ranks. The *hastati* composed the front, the *principes* the centre, and the *triarii* the rear rank. The open order, which the legionary troops preserved, gave to every foldier the free exercife of his arms, and afforded fpace for reinforcements to advance to the relief of thofe, whose ftrength was exhausted. The fpaces likewise gave room for the firft line to fall back into the fecond, and with them to make a new attack; and if thefe two ranks when united were overpowered, they retired to the rear rank, with whose affiftance they renewed the charge with threefold impetuofity. The regular manner, in which this advance or retreat was conducted, conftituted the perfection of the Roman difcipline. The fuccefs, which it muft finally fecure, was certain, when we confider the legions oppofed to irregular barbarians, who, if once routed, never returned to a fecond attack. In many battles, the Romans were at firft repulfed by the number or impetuofity of the hostile troops: but by their judicious arrangements and evolutions, the event was ultimately favourable; the enemy was checked in the midft of his fuccefsful career, and the laurel of victory was fuddenly fnatched from his hands^x.

The

^x Livy contrasts the phalanx with the legion, and points out the fuperior excellence of the latter, when comparing the forces of Alexander with the Romans—"Statarius uterque miles, ordines fervans: fed illa phalanx immobilis et unius generis:

The first model of a Roman camp seems to have been suggested by the rude intrenchments, which Romulus caused to be thrown up to defend his rising city. This plan was in succeeding times greatly improved; and the camp of the Romans was remarkable for the perfect regularity of its quadrangular form: it was divided by parallel lines, composing spacious streets, for the accommodation, in separate detachments, of cavalry, infantry, and auxiliaries; was secured by the breadth and depth of its ditch, and the loftiness of its ramparts, armed with a line of strong and close palisades. When at this day we trace the remaining vestiges of their encampments, we can in some degree realize the descriptions which the ancients have given us, and fairly infer the greatness of their strength from their long duration. Many camps in this island, and upon the continent, such as that near Kyneton, upon the borders of Herefordshire—the camp near Dorchester in Dorsetshire; at Caster, or Venta Icenorum, near Norwich; Cæsar's camp upon the Rhine, and that which overtops the white cliffs of Dieppe, may be supposed, from their present fresh and unbroken appearance, to have been formed only a few centuries ago.

generis: Romana acies distinctior, ex pluribus partibus constans: facilis partienti, quacunque opus esset, facilis jungenti." Liv. lib. viii. c. 8. et lib. ix.

"Yet was this *phalanx* never or very seldom able to stand against the Roman armies, which were embattelled in so excellent a forme, as I know not whether any nation besides them have used, either before or since." Sir W. Raleigh, p. 263.

The

The elegant and lively historian Livy, presents us with a very striking instance of the effect produced upon the minds of their enemies, by the martial improvements made by the Romans. Philip the second, king of Macedon, caused the bodies of some of his soldiers, who had fallen in a skirmish, to be brought into his camp, that they might be buried with military honours. His motive was to instigate his army to expose themselves more resolutely to the dangers of war. But the method which he took to rouse their courage produced a contrary effect. His troops, who had been accustomed to fight with the Greeks and Illyrians, and to inflict and receive only slight wounds made by darts and arrows, now beheld the bodies of their dead comrades marked by deep and ghastly cuts, and deprived of heads and limbs by the keen and vigorous strokes of the Spanish swords, the weighty weapons of the Romans. With dismay they reflected upon the enemies with whom they had to contend, and the great superiority of their arms, and mode of fighting. Philip himself, no less alarmed, recalled his son Perseus and his troops from the straits of Pelagonia to reinforce his desponding army. From a lofty hill he soon after reconnoitered the position of the enemy, and took a distinct view of their camp. He remarked the different quarters into which it was divided, the exact order in which the tents were pitched, and the intersections which formed the streets. Astonished at the admirable arrangement of all the parts, he candidly declared, as Pyrrhus king of Epirus

Epirus had done before, that no nation could equal the Romans in the skill displayed in this essential branch of the art of war^y.

But the Romans found, that the perfection of their movements in the field, and the security of their position in camps, would not complete the military art, without imposing the strictest restraints upon the conduct of a foldier, and holding out the most lucrative and glorious recompence for his valour. Such was the inflexible rigour of martial law, that cowardice and disobedience led to inevitable death, inflicted by the swords and darts of his comrades; whilst, on the other hand, every exploit was attended by its appropriate honour. The rich trappings of horses, the golden chain, the civic, the mural, and the rostral crowns, awaited the return of the veteran from the field of battle; and pensions arising from the sale of the conquered lands, or settlements upon fertile spots of ground, were granted for the support of his declining age, and as the rewards of his long and faithful services.

The *Triumph*, which derived its origin from the earliest age of the republic, when Romulus returned home laden with spoils of his vanquished enemies, tended in a much greater degree to cherish this martial spirit. This ceremony, repugnant as it was to the feelings of humanity, and calculated

^y Liv. lib. 31. c. 36.

to encourage arrogance and ostentation, was superior, in point of pomp and splendour, to the honour ever paid to victorious chiefs and armies in any other country. It was attended by an innumerable concourse of spectators, collected from every part of the empire. Such was the glory assigned to Paulus Æmilius, the great conqueror of Macedon, after he had brought Perseus, king of that country, and his family, prisoners to Rome. The procession passed through spacious and lofty arches, ornamented with pictures and statues, to the splendid temple of the lofty Capitol. At first appeared bands of trumpeters, and other martial musicians, who, to prepare the spectators for a display of military magnificence, sounded the loud and animating charge of battle. The priests, clothed in long robes, and crowned with chaplets, walked by the side of the white oxen of Clitumnus devoted to sacrifice. The sculptured figures, painted banners, and various symbols of the subdued cities and provinces, were distinctly displayed. The gold and silver coin, deposited in capacious vases, and the golden goblets and rich plate which had adorned the royal banquets of Antigonus and Seleucus, best disposed for the view of the people, were carried by robust soldiers. Burnished helmets, coats of mail, waving crests, and glittering spears, were conveyed in long trains of carriages. The chariot of the captive king next appeared, containing his diadem and his armour. Then walked Perseus clad in mourning, with slow and melancholy steps, attended by his children and friends, preceding

preceding the conqueror himself. Paulus Emilius appeared standing erect, in a magnificent chariot, drawn by four milk-white horses; his countenance was expressive of great dignity, heightened by his advanced age. He was clothed in a purple robe, his head encircled with a refulgent diadem, and holding in his hand a branch of laurel. The procession was closed by the whole army, with their standards displayed at the front of their legions, intermixing with the song of triumph the praises of their general.

Those who instituted the triumph as a national celebrity, perfectly understood the genius of a people disposed to catch the flame of emulation from every incident, which gave dignity to the character of a foldier. This honour was indeed rarely granted to any officer of inferior rank to a dictator, consul, or prætor: but as each of them shared it in common with every tribune, centurion, and even legionary of his army, it failed not to inspire them all with ardour for military service^z. The same distinction,

^z The honour of a triumph was refused to L. Cornelius Lentulus, because he had borne none of these offices: "Res triumpho dignas esse censebat senatus: sed exemplum a majoribus non accepisse, ut qui, neque dictator, neque consul, neque prætor res gessisset, triumpharet." Liv. Hist. lib. xxxi. c. 20. But this honour was granted to Pompey, when only a knight. See his Life by Plutarch, vol. ii. p. 299. Plutarch, a Greek, and Josephus, a Jew, have given circumstantial descriptions of the Roman triumph. It is only from foreigners, or those who write

distinction, therefore, which was the reward of one victory, frequently proved the source of another.

III. Rome at an early period called for the aid of religion, to give greater efficacy to her civil laws and military institutions. Numa lulled his infant kingdom into a short repose, in order to strengthen it by sacred establishments, B. C. 713. The attention paid to augury, which was at once the resource and the delusion of the Romans, arose to the highest degree of superstition. Not only the departed heroes, who had been raised to the rank of divinity by the elegant fictions of Greece, as well as the gods of other nations, were naturalized; but every virtue and vice, every art and profession, the deities of every grove and stream, derived a peculiar character from their respective votaries; were represented by images, ornamented with peculiar symbols, and worshipped with appropriate rites. The excessive credulity of the populace, ever eager for the account of prodigies and fables, was at all times flattered by the magistrates, and respected by the philosophers, who, however they might smile in secret at the prevailing superstition, still assumed in public the mask of external reverence for the mythology of their country. The ceremonies of Paganism were in general of the most cheerful

write for foreigners, that we can expect particular accounts of manners, customs, and ceremonies, which are familiar to natives.

tendency; processions to the temples, except in cases of public calamity, were social meetings of festivity; and sacrifices to the gods were little more than the feasts of their worshippers.

A scrupulous attention to religion was the peculiar boast and pride of the Romans: and Cicero hesitated not to assert, that to their piety, and their firm belief in the over-ruling providence of the gods, they were indebted for their ascendancy over all other nations^a. The establishment of pontiffs, flamens, augurs, and vestals, was supported by consecrated lands; and as the civil and military departments were not deemed incompatible with the religious, even emperors, consuls, and generals aspired to, and exercised, the offices of the priesthood. The union of religion indeed with the civil government is a striking feature in the Roman policy. Augustus was sensible of its great importance; and he, as well as succeeding emperors, sought to raise himself above the attacks of his enemies, and exalt the respectability of his character to the greatest elevation, by assuming the venerable title and inviolable dignity of the Pontifex Maximus.

IV. The spirit of patriotism was never more generally diffused, nor longer preserved, than in ancient

^a “Sed pietate ac religione, atque *hac una* sapientia, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.” Cicero de Harusp. Responsis.

Rome. So ardent were the sentiments which it inspired, and so daring the actions which it excited, that it was rather a passion than a habit of the mind. It was the source of numberless virtues; it fostered patience, and alleviated toil; it extinguished the fire of ambition, and even silenced the voice of nature; and taught the Romans to despise all private interest, and to submit to the severest pain for the benefit of the state. Hence Junius Brutus condemned his sons, for being engaged in a conspiracy with Tarquin, the exiled king, to an ignominious death. Regulus, unmoved by the entreaties of his weeping relations and friends, and undismayed by the prospect of certain torture, returned to Carthage; and the inflexible Manlius Torquatus, checking the strongest feelings of the heart, devoted his victorious son, for fighting contrary to his orders, to the sword of the executioner.

The republic was frequently agitated by the most violent convulsions of party. The debates of the senate were interrupted by the clamorous demands of the tribunes, solicitous to secure the rights of the people. The forum was often a scene of war, and the peaceful gown was stained with blood. Both Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, the intemperate advocates for the revival of the Agrarian law, misled by injudicious zeal for the privileges of the plebeians, fell a sacrifice to the vengeance of aristocratic power; and in a subsequent period, the wants of the profligate, and the ambition of the noble,

produced a deep and formidable conspiracy, which was detected by the vigilance of Cicero, and hurried Catiline to open rebellion and death.

Still we find that internal discord was often silenced, when intelligence was brought to the city of hostile designs and movements. Such an alarm was sufficient to abate the anger of contending factions, and to unite every order in the firmest union for the public service. The arrival of Hannibal in Italy, produced an immediate cessation of all civil dissensions. The storm, which had raged at home suddenly increased its violence, but changed its direction, and fell with redoubled fury upon the common enemy.

From the love of their country immediately resulted, in the purest times of the commonwealth, the sacrifice of private interest to the public welfare. The Romans were aware that opulence, by the introduction of luxury, would disqualify them for the toils of war, and destroy that genuine patriotism which limits ambition to the sole desire of acting for the general good. They therefore esteemed poverty a virtue; and this, which in the first inhabitants of Rome was the effect of necessity, became among their descendants, for some ages, an object of choice. They considered it as the sure guardian of liberty, and opposed it to the encroachments of corruption. A Roman, during the purest times of the commonwealth, thought that frugality formed a part of his glory; and at the same time that he exposed

exposed his life to every danger, in order to fill the public treasury, he performed military service at first for no stipend, and afterwards for a small one. Every one thought himself sufficiently opulent in the riches of the state, and would have esteemed it unworthy of his high character to require any compensation beyond that which was necessary for his bare subsistence, from the service with which his country had honoured him, and which he performed to fill her treasures, and not to amass his own. Thus disinterested he fought for glory, not for plunder; and after the expiration of his campaigns, he was content to engage in the employments and practise the economy of the humblest of his countrymen. Regulus requested permission from the senate to return from the command of his army to cultivate his little farm^a; and Paulus Æmilius, who filled Rome with the rich spoils of Macedon, died without sufficient money to defray the expences of his funeral^b.

^a B. C. 256.^b B. C. 168.

CHAPTER IX.

The Subject continued.

THE causes stated in the preceding chapter had the greatest influence upon the sentiments and the conduct of the Romans, both at home and abroad, established their military character, and raised them by slow degrees to the summit of dominion.

Vain were the efforts of the people of Italy to resist them; and the successive attacks of the sovereigns of Macedon, Syria, and Egypt, were equally fruitless. The disgraceful capitulation of the legions in the straits of Caudium, the near approach of Coriolanus to Rome at the head of the Volsci, were productive of no permanent advantage to the conquerors. The armies of the republic were often compelled to fly, or to surrender, and were sometimes reduced to the most humiliating distress. But the severest repulses tended only to give a new spring to their exertions. The impetuous fury of the Gauls, and the alacrity of Pyrrhus, made indeed a temporary impression; but they could not finally prevail. At one time Terentius Varro was slain at Cannæ, at another Cneius and Publius Scipio were cut off, in Spain; their forces were routed, and the bravest of their troops were slain; but the cou-
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rage of the senate and the people was still firm and undaunted; the spirit of their institutions cherished it, and their exertions were too much the result of calm intrepidity and confirmed habit, to be disconcerted by the fall of a general, the overthrow of an army, or the suspension of a triumph. Victory was sometimes capricious in the distribution of her favours; she flew to give transient success to other nations, and swelled their minds with delusive hopes of conquest. But most propitious to discipline, valour, and perseverance, she failed not finally to encircle with her unfading laurel the brows of her darling Romans.

In the Carthaginians we behold their most formidable enemies. They were the only people, who, by their courage, opulence, territories, and resources, seemed capable of contending with them for empire, with any prospect of success^b. Their tran-

^b For an accurate account of the constitution, laws, commerce, and dominions of Carthage, see Ferguson's Roman Republic, vol. i. p. 88. Into one chapter of moderate length he has compressed the memorable transactions of the second Punic war, p. 106. The account of the battle of Cannæ is detailed with singular precision and perspicuity.

Polybius has drawn a concise but striking contrast between the flourishing condition of Rome, and the declining state of Carthage, at the commencement of the first Punic war. Lib. vi. sect. 49. &c. See Aristot. de Republica, lib. ii. cap. 9. Polybius supplied Livy with much information relative to the Punic wars. Livy has not only adopted, in many instances, his statement of facts, but even has literally translated his

transactions and wars form one of the most interesting portions of the history we are now considering. But unfortunately for their fame, and the wishes of posterity, the chief accounts of their history are recorded by their enemies. The Roman historians take delight in placing all their transactions in the most unfavourable light, and asperse their character with some of the most odious imputations. They stigmatize their perfidy by the expression of *Punica fides*; and to throw the greatest dishonour upon the character of Hannibal, Livy ascribes to him *perfidia plus quam Punica*, although the actions which he relates, do not justify the charge. Nor are the Greek writers totally free from an unfavourable bias, and the influence of similar prejudices. The most impartial and full detail of their government, laws, arts, manners, and institutions, would have been peculiarly interesting to Britain, as they rose to dominion and opulence by the power of their navy, and the extent of their colonies and commerce. During the second Punic war, the full energy of both nations was drawn forth into action^c. Hannibal combined in his character all the qualifications of

expressions. As an acknowledgment for such obligations, he has merely mentioned Polybius in such terms as these: "haudquaquam spernendus auctor," and "non incertum auctorem." Liv. lib. xxx. c. 45. and lib. xxxiii. c. 10. I am inclined however to admit the reasons brought by Drakenborch, tom. iv. p. 506. for supposing that these expressions were intended to convey sentiments of respect.

^c B. C. 220.

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a consummate general; and when the magnitude and the number of the obstacles he surmounted in his invasion of Italy be considered, the extensive and hostile regions which he traversed, the factious parties of Carthage, which attempted to disconcert all his measures, the discordant interests of the allied forces which he reconciled, and the powerful armies and skilful generals he opposed, he may surely be ranked, where Scipio Africanus, his great rival in arms, did not hesitate to place him, among the greatest heroes of antiquity.

Even after the successive defeats of the Romans at Thrasimene, at Trebia, and the complete destruction of their best army at Cannæ, when they were basely deserted by many of their allies, the senate did not relax, even for a moment, the firmness of ancient institutions, and disdained to negotiate with the enemy, while he continued within the territories of the republic. And at that critical conjuncture, far from being dismayed at his approach, they sold by public auction the ground upon which his army was encamped; and it was purchased at no less a price than it would have reached in time of peace. At the same time a body of troops advanced from the city to give battle to Hannibal, another detachment marched out at an opposite gate to reinforce the army in Spain^d.

^d Livy, lib. xxvi, c. 11.

The victorious Hannibal, instead of making an additional effort of courage in compliance with the advice of his most experienced officers, and marching with rapidity to Rome, immediately after the battle of Cannæ, before his enemies could recover from their consternation, was imprudent enough to allow his soldiers to indulge in the enervating luxuries of Capua. This was the subject of his vain lamentation, as he was reluctantly sailing back to his native country, and beheld for the last time the lessening shores of Italy, that had been so frequently the scenes of his glory. Such is the interesting account of Livy:—But it seems probable that a want of those supplies, which he requested immediately after the battle of Cannæ, was the true cause of the decline of his fortune, as he continued to ravage Italy for the course of fourteen years after his stay at Capua; during that time he gained several victories, and kept his enemies in a state of constant alarm for the safety of the empire.

The great Scipio Africanus turned the tide of success, and the fortune of Hannibal sunk under his triumphant arms. The battle of Zama, in which these great Generals were opposed to each other, gave to the Romans a complete victory. The Carthaginians were compelled to supplicate a peace, which was granted upon the most humiliating terms. The third Punic war produced the complete overthrow of their power. The Romans instigated by a cruel policy, pursued the advice of
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the elder Cato, who was constantly inculcating in the Senate, the necessity of the total destruction of the rival state. The city of Carthage was taken by assault, the inhabitants slaughtered, and the place reduced to ashes. In the same year, Corinth was destroyed by Mummius, and Greece was reduced to a Roman Province^c. After the defeat of the Carthaginians, there were no people sufficiently powerful to contend with the Romans for the command of the ocean. They could therefore convey their troops without interruption, and carry on their conquests upon the most distant coasts. As their plan of operations was conducted upon regular principles, their success was not unstable and transitory, like that of Alexander the Great, but continued through the long period of nine centuries to accumulate power, and gradually add kingdom to kingdom.

After the Romans had thus subdued the fairest countries of the antient world, the arms of their ambitious Generals were turned against each other. To the bloody proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, succeeded the triumphs of the politic Cæsar. Elated by the extent of his victories in Gaul, Germany, and Britain, and instigated by insatiable ambition, he resolved to contend with the brave and amiable Pompey his son in law for the supreme power. The Senate aware of his designs, had decreed that the General who should pass the

^c B. C. 147.

Rubicon, a small river between Italy and Gaul, with an armed force, should be guilty of treason. Disdaining this prohibition, Cæsar marched to Rome at the head of his faithful legions, pursued his rival Pompey, and defeated his army with great slaughter, in the fields of Pharsalia^f. Pompey fled to Egypt, where he was basely slain by order of Ptolemy. Cato, who was a better patriot, than a philosopher, determining not to survive the liberties of his country, nor to swell the triumph of Cæsar, put an end to his life at Utica in Africa. Cæsar, now secure in the possession of the empire, consulted for the happiness and welfare of the people by whom he was much beloved. His person was declared sacred, he was invested with the office of perpetual dictator, and was hailed *Imperator*, a title which implied supreme civil, as well as military power. From a suspicion that he was aiming at despotic sway, and was eager to add to his titles the odious one of King, sixty Senators formed a conspiracy against him; at the head of them was Brutus, whose life he had spared, and who shared his friendship. He was in the Ides of March assassinated in the senate house; he resisted till he saw the dagger of Brutus raised against him, and then covering his face with his robe, pierced by numerous wounds, he expired at the feet of Pompey's statue.

Marc Antony, Lepidus, and Octavius, grand nephew, and adopted heir to Cæsar, formed a

^f B. C. 48.

second triumvirate. They cemented their union with the blood of their friends and relations: of those who suffered none was so illustrious as Cicero, sacrificed by Octavius, whose friend and benefactor he had been, to the profligate Antony. With the boldness which truth inspired, Cicero had provoked his rage by exposing to the senate and the public his secret vices in the Orations, which from their resemblance to those pronounced by Demosthenes against Philip of Macedon, were called *Philippics*. His matchless talents, un sullied character, and a long life devoted to the service of his friends and the state, afforded him no protection against a merciless enemy. Assassins pursued him to the shores of Cajeta, and near Tusculum, one of his favourite villas, the scene of his philosophical studies, they severed his head from his body. He suffered with greater firmness than he had ever shown upon former occasions of distress. His death alone did not satisfy Antony, he caused the head and hands of Cicero to be fixed upon the rostra, from which that most eloquent of orators had so often instructed and delighted his countrymen: but cruel and revengeful as Antony was, it was not in his power to prevent the spectators from paying the tribute of honour and gratitude which was due to eminent talents, and important public services; for they could but dimly and indistinctly behold a sight so deplorable, by reason of the abundance of their tears.

The republicans assembled an army in Thrace, and Philippi witnessed a victory which Antony might almost claim as his own, for the conduct of Octavius was evasive and timid. There Brutus and Cassius after their defeat, despairing of the republic and of themselves, fell by their own hands. Antony soon after, captivated by the charms of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, regardless of his honour and his safety, lavished the Roman provinces upon her, and passed his days in voluptuousness. Octavius, indignant at his treatment of his sister Octavia, whom Antony had divorced, fought and vanquished him at the naval battle of Actium, upon the coast of Epirus. He pursued the fugitives to Egypt, and they escaped his vengeance by suicide. Antony fell by his own sword; and Cleopatra, disdaining to grace the triumph of the conqueror, died by the poison of an asp applied to her arm. Octavius returned to Rome unrivalled master of the empire, in the year before Christ 31. From that time commenced the era of the Roman Emperors. The name of Octavius was afterwards lost in that of *Augustus*, which was perpetuated with honour, as the title of the sixth month of the Roman year.

Augustus having always present to his mind the image of the murdered Julius Cæsar, pursued the same objects of ambition by different means. He was cautious and artful: when engaged in the Triumvirate, he resisted the proposal of Antony and Lepidus to begin a proscription, but when they had
determined

determined upon that sanguinary measure, he acted with more severity than either of them. Unlike his great predecessor in empire, he had not always the magnanimity to pardon his vanquished foes. To strike terror into his enemies, he ordered three hundred Senators and Knights, who had espoused the party of Antony, to be slain at the altar of Julius Cæsar. Yet the equity of his laws, and the prudent administration of his government after he was Emperor, during forty-four years of glory and peace, made no inconsiderable recompence to his country for the evils which he had before either encouraged or inflicted. His munificence, moderation, and paternal care, were bounded only by the limits of his extensive dominions. He presented to the world an extraordinary character, as he proved that the smiles of fortune, far from increasing the severity of his temper, and giving a keener edge to his resentment, could soften a timid and sanguinary tyrant into a mild and generous prince. He died at Nola in Campania, aged 76, A.U.C. 767. A.D. 14.

The period of history, from the time of Marius and Sylla to the accession of Augustus, presents the most calamitous prospect of bloody proscriptions, and are crowded with images of martial horror. It abounds with examples of successful villainy and unfortunate virtue. But after the naval victory, obtained over Antony at Actium, had given the empire to Augustus, the scene brightened into the fair views of order and happiness, the storms of

of civil discord were hushed into peace, and philosophy, literature, and the arts, derived the greatest and most honourable encouragement from his patronage.

To the Tuscans Rome was first indebted for works of architecture, sculpture, and painting. Their productions were characterised by boldness, solidity, and grandeur, as appear from the foundations of the Capitol, the remains of the Cloaca Maxima, and many other specimens which are still extant. But the superior elegance of Grecian works of art attracted the attention of the Romans, as soon as their conquests gave them an opportunity of becoming conversant with them.

From the indiscriminate collection of the specimens of the fine arts, arose by slow degrees the genuine taste of the Romans. When Marcellus took Syracuse, he sent home all the pictures and statues of that elegant city. The remonstrances of Fabius Maximus against his conduct were uttered without effect; and in vain did he represent, that as such trifles were only calculated for the amusement of an idle and effeminate people, they were beneath the notice of his countrymen, distinguished as they were by the manly roughness of their character. The love of the arts, which commenced at this period, was gratified by the conquest of those Grecian cities most eminent for their productions. The triumph of Emilius was graced with some of the choicest monuments of sculpture; and Mummius,

nius, the tasteless conqueror of Achaia, completely stripped Corinth of her statues and pictures, to enrich his native city. Sometimes the vanity, and sometimes the avarice of generals and governors of provinces, contributed to make Rome a repository of the fairest spoils of Greece; and the custom of adorning the theatres with them by the authority of the magistrates, contributed to diffuse a refined taste. During the civil wars, the public and private collections were considerably enriched; for Sylla brought home the plunder of Athens, and Julius Cæsar formed a valuable cabinet of ancient gems.

An æra of the highest refinement commenced with the reign of Augustus, whose palace was adorned with the rich vases of Corinth. Grecian artists were invited to Rome, and the masterly execution of the medals of that period, prove their great superiority to those of former times. It is remarked by Suetonius, that Augustus found Rome built of brick, and that he left it built of marble. It displayed under his auspices, in palaces, temples, and theatres, the majesty and elegance of Grecian architecture. The public edifices were furnished with the choicest ornaments brought from the same country, and the streets and squares exhibited the exquisite statues of all the Pagan deities^g.

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^g The admirer of ancient sculpture may see some fine specimens of the art in the Pomfret collection in Oxford. He will however be sorry to find them crowded together in a gloomy

The same obligations, which the Romans owed to Greece for inspiring them with a love of the arts, were extended to philosophy and polite literature, with this remarkable difference, that in the former they were only admirers, and in the latter they ventured to be competitors with their great masters. A fondness for sculpture and painting, and the cultivation of eloquence and poetry, kept nearly an equal pace; and the same age saw them arise and flourish together. Writers, whose works are the glory of ancient Italy, and the praise of every age, adorned this period, and reached that standard of excellence, from which the unpolished style of their predecessors, and the degenerate af-

room. The Pembroke collection at Wilton is remarkable for the number of busts: when I saw them some years ago, I thought few of them equal to the fame of the collection. Perhaps Lord Carlisle, at Castle Howard, in Yorkshire, has as many, if not more, genuine antiques. At Mr. Duncombe's, at Duncombe Park, in the same county, may be seen the ancient *Gæcian dog*, formerly in the possession of Mr. Lock, and the *Discobolus*, so finished and so easy in attitude, that it is worthy of the chisel of a Phidias, or Praxiteles. But the best school of observation which this country can afford to any one, who is desirous of improving his taste, may be found at Mr. Townley's Collection, lately purchased by Parliament for the British Museum. The statue of *Isis*, or *Cybele*, crowned with the lotus, is majestic; the sleeping *Adonis* is very elegant; but the *Thalia*, or Pastoral Muse, is so inimitable for delicate proportions, and transparent drapery, which adorns without concealing any part of the figure, that it exceeds all praise. For an entertaining account of sculpture, and of English collections in particular, see Mr. Dallaway's *Anecdotes of the Arts*, p. 163, &c.

festation

fection of their followers, seem equally remote. Horace and Virgil, Tibullus and Propertius, flourished in the court of Augustus. The two first, indeed, through the noble patronage and friendship of Mecenas, enjoyed the smiles of the Emperor, who was himself distinguished by the elegance of his compositions, and the purity of his taste. The Lyric as well as the Epic muse were grateful for his protection and liberality; and Horace and Virgil, indulging the vanity of the Julian family, who claimed a divine origin, raised their patron to the rank of a deity, and perpetuated his fame in their incomparable poems.

Notwithstanding the external magnificence of Rome, and her prosperity during the reign of Augustus and his immediate successors, the manners of the people gradually underwent a great change; the state contained in her bosom the causes of her own decay, and the poison of dissolution preyed upon her vitals. She became as abject and degraded, as she had ever been great and powerful. The empress of the world sunk into the most humiliating condition; and her downfall may be attributed, I. to the decay of patriotism; II. the introduction of luxury; III. the neglect of the ancient modes of education^a.

The

^a In a train of beautiful allegory Sir W. Raleigh thus alludes to the preceding and subsequent parts of this history. "We have left the empire of Rome, the last of the four great monarchies

The indiscriminate admission of all the subjects of the empire to the freedom of the city, although a conciliating, was a most impolitic measure. Instead of raising the natives of the provinces to the dignity of Romans, this privilege produced the opposite effect, and sunk the latter to a level with the former. It extinguished those high sentiments of patriotism, and that pride of comparison, upon which the old republicans had valued themselves, as it destroyed an exclusive interest in the prosperity of the empire, and degraded the dignity of the Roman character. The right of citizenship was rendered of no value, by being so widely diffused; and the enthusiasm, which had fired a Brutus, a Cocles, and a Manlius, to fight for the tombs of their fathers, and the altars of their gods was extinguished. The Roman people were no longer actuated by the same love of independence, or the same detestation of servility. They looked no more with a jealous eye upon the power of the senate, or the prerogatives of the patricians; and undistinguished in the crowds of new competitors for the same privileges, they gradually sunk into insignificance. The bond of union and sub-

narchies of the world; flourishing in the middle of the field, having rooted up, or cut down, all that kept it from the eyes and admiration of the world. But after some continuance, it shall begin to lose the beauty it had; the storms of ambition shall beat her great boughs and branches one against another, her leaves shall fall off, her limbs wither, and a rabble of barbarous nations enter the field, and cut her down." *History of the World*, p. 668.

ordination,

ordination was broken, and the city was torn by innumerable factions of strangers, as soon as every province was allowed to form cabals and affociations, and to shelter its inhabitants under the patronage of some great patrician.

The profusion and extravagance of the rich were displayed in the celebration of the public games. The combats of gladiators, and the races of charioteers, were exhibited to the dissolute crowds, who, indulging only the impulse of a childish curiosity, spent whole days in the Circus. The satirist Juvenal uses those strong expressions, which are characteristic of the manners of the times, when he says, that the Roman populace had no anxiety but for two objects—bread and the sight of the public games. The licentious productions of the stage, often represented with all the attractions of splendid decorations and crowded processions, vitiated the general taste, inflamed the passions of youth, and encouraged dissipation and immorality of conduct in persons of every class.

II. From the destruction of Carthage may be traced the gradual progress of *Luxury*. Profusion and extravagance began to prevail as soon as the precious metals were introduced in abundance from the conquered provinces. Voluptuousness usurped the place of temperance, indolence succeeded to activity; self-interest, sensuality, and avarice, totally extinguished that ardour, which in antient times had glowed in every breast for the

public good. The streams of wealth, that flowed into Rome at the decline of the commonwealth, were such as almost exceed beliefⁱ. Yet the expences of their luxurious feasts, their spacious palaces, costly furniture, dress, and plate, and their pictures and statues, caused the opulent Romans sometimes to exceed their great revenues. No less than eighteen elegant villas, situated in the most delightful parts of Italy, were possessed by Cicero; and, as if the land was not sufficient to gratify the caprice of a Roman of fashion, the Lucerine lakes and the shores of Baiæ were occupied by houses which extended into the water. Such was the complaint of Horace, when declaiming against the extravagant fashion of his time; and the ruins of many of these buildings now extant confirm the propriety, or rather the necessity of his censures. Every nobleman in the reign of Tiberius had such numerous parties of slaves, that they were classed according to their nations, and stationed in separate divisions of his palaces. Seneca mentions single suppers given with such profusion of costly fare, as to consume the whole estate of a Roman Knight. Apicius, the epicure, committed suicide, because his fortune, inadequate to the enormous demands of his depraved appetite, did not exceed the sum of eighty thousand pounds. Cookery was studied as a com-

ⁱ ————— *—fœvior armis*

Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciscitur orbem.

Juven. Sat. vi.

See the excellent note of Brotier, de Luxu Romanorum. Tacitus, tom. i. p. 402. 4to. ed.

plete science ; the number and expence of dishes at every great feast were incredible ; and these extravagant banquets were enlivened by male and female dancers, musicians, and pantomimes.

The republic, which had long withstood the shocks of external violence, fell gradually a prey to prosperity. Her gallant chiefs had viewed with undaunted eyes the approach of Hannibal, and defied the armies of Pyrrhus : but their degenerate descendants, even the posterity of Fabius and of Scipio, enriched with the spoils of Greece, and surfeited with the luxuries of Asia, leaving their battles to be fought by barbarian mercenaries, sunk supine on beds of sloth, and heard the trumpet of battle with dismay.

Such indeed was the change of manners, that the character of the people was altered in the space of a century, and a general depravity was visible in all orders of the state. The Consuls, after having obtained their rank by intrigues and bribery, undertook their campaigns either to enrich themselves with the spoils of conquered nations, or to plunder the provinces of the allies under the pretence of defending them. From such unjustifiable practices were derived the immense treasures of Crassus, Lucullus, and Cæsar. And as the means of corruption increased, so likewise in equal proportion did the disposition to be corrupted. The populace, obsequious, indigent, and idle, were ready to follow any candidate, who was

rich enough to purchase their votes. The laws were not enforced to correct these abuses, as the magistrates themselves beheld with approbation, or with indifference, the venality of the people. The administration of government under many of the emperors, influenced by the caprice of themselves or their favourites, was sometimes rigid, and sometimes relaxed: the tide of degeneracy flowed with the greatest rapidity, and swept away all ranks in its current.

To increase this train of destructive evils, the mode of *Education* was completely changed. In more antient times the noble matrons had taught their children the pure lessons of morality, and kept a strict watch over all their words and actions. The minds of the noble youth were led on to the study of the liberal arts, and whatever profession they followed, whether of war or of pleading, they devoted themselves to that single pursuit, and by close application embraced the whole compass of their particular study. But in the later times of which we are speaking, the children were entrusted to the care, or rather were abandoned to the arts of mean and ignorant domestics. The persons chiefly employed for this purpose were indigent Greeks, who flocked in great numbers to Rome: their versatile talents, insinuating manners, and gross flattery, gained them admission into the families of the great, where they soon raised themselves to places of confidence and emolument. Corrupted by the examples, and encouraged by the indulgence
of

of such teachers, the young men soon assumed the character of licentiousness and effrontery. The sports of the field, and the diversions of the Circus and the Theatre, became the sole topics of their conversation, and the darling objects of their pursuit; and no time was given to the cultivation of the liberal arts, or the study of the Roman or Grecian history^k.

Nor were their opinions upon the most important subjects less vitiated in early years by the progress of a specious and destructive philosophy. The principles of Epicurus had been for some time fashionable in Rome; and his disciples boldly denied the providence of a supreme Ruler of the universe, and openly maintained, that death was the extinction of all existence. The great Fabricius, aware of the pernicious tendency of such opinions, when he heard that Cinias, the philosopher, had made them the subject of conversation at the table of Pyrrhus, exclaimed, may the enemies of Rome ever entertain such principles! They gave a fatal blow to the established religion, and were calculated to undermine the great sanctions of morality. The Roman youths were thus taught to despise the ceremonies, and deride the maxims of their national belief, a firm adherence to which had been the glory of their ancestors, and had not only operated powerfully upon their mar-

^k Quintil. de Oratoribus, p. 451. Ed. Lips. Juvenal, Sat. 3.

tial efforts, but was closely connected with the civil constitution of the republic. This philosophy of Epicurus had the recommendation of great and attracting examples to make it popular; for it was adorned with the poetical graces of Lucretius, and honoured by the praise of Virgil; it was embraced by the sagacious Cæsar, and the accomplished Atticus.

The various causes of her decline prepared Rome for her most abandoned emperors. The tame servility of the senate, and the turbulent spirit of the prætorian bands, sometimes raised to the imperial purple the meanest and most undeserving of the soldiers. Yet the corruption of principles was not so general, as not to make a Tiberius, a Nero, and a Caligula surveyed with horror and detestation by their contemporaries, as well as by posterity. They were alike infamous for a sensuality, which was a disgrace to nature; and for a vindictive rage, which was the avowed foe to liberty and every virtue. We read of the cruel edicts of these emperors, their accusations of the innocent, their deceitful friendships, the rewards they bestowed upon informers, private assassinations, and public executions; with no small astonishment, that human wickedness could proceed so far; and that human patience could so long endure their enormities. From such scenes we turn to relieve our minds, by contemplating the pure characters and glorious conduct of Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Antoninus Pius,

Pius, Marcus Antoninus, and Probus¹. Such illustrious persons afforded some support to the declining state, but were not capable of giving permanency to their own wise and prudent institutions; since most of their successors were deficient in political talents, and abused their power for the worst purposes. Their justice and humanity suspended that downfall of the empire, which they could not prevent; but the sparks of ancient virtue were so nearly extinguished, that the efforts of a few individuals, eminent as they were in station, and armed with sovereign authority, could not fan them into a flame.

As the prosperity of Rome had been attended with the flourishing state of the arts, literature and science, they gradually declined with her; and the same change, which was visible in the extinction of liberty and martial spirit, appeared equally in its effects on the intellectual powers: ignorance was the companion of corruption and fervility.

The most remarkable event which took place during the decline of the empire, was the removal of the seat of government from Rome to the ancient city of Byzantium. Constantine the Great, on the death of his father, was raised to the imperial dignity in Britain^m, where he commanded some of the bravest of the legions. He had the glory to

¹ A. D. 80—160. ^m A. D. 306.

be the first Emperor who professed the Christian religion, and imparted to his numerous subjects the various benefits which resulted from its public profession and establishment. After the defeat of Maxentius, when he found himself secured in the possession of his throne, he laid the foundation of Constantinople. Its situation is one of the most beautiful in the universe; secure by nature against hostile attacks, and convenient for every purpose of commerce. The Emperor removed his court, and induced many of the noble families to reside with him in this new capitalⁿ. Whatever could contribute to its magnificence, or the comforts and enjoyments of its inhabitants, was soon procured, and in less than a century it rose to such splendour as to dispute the pre-eminence for riches and numbers, even with Rome itself.

The great object of Constantine, in removing the seat of empire to the confines of Europe and Asia, was to establish a barrier against the barbarians. He judged the new metropolis a station well calculated to check the incroachments of those who inhabited the countries between the Tanais and the Danube, and to watch the motions of the king of Persia. Subsequent events justified the policy of the measure: Constantinople stopped the passage of the barbarians through the Bosphorus, and checked the advances of the Persians under Chosroes. The City of Rome sunk in importance, as its rival ad-

vanced in power and splendour; still the general prosperity and security of the empire were rather confirmed than endangered by the change. The removal of the capital was a measure of expediency which naturally followed from the growing extent and peculiar circumstances of the empire, which might have been as well defended wherever the seat of government was placed, whether at Rome, at Antioch, at Nicomedia, or at Constantinople; had not the empire, at a much earlier period than the emperors changed their places of residence, received the deepest and most incurable wounds, from the operation of the united causes we have stated.

The reign of Theodosius^o, who obtained, as he merited, the title of *the Great*, was remarkable for the complete subversion of the Pagan religion. He bequeathed to his sons Arcadius and Honorius, the separate empires of the east and the west^p. The provinces of middle and lower Italy, the only relics of imperial dominion there, fell to the share of the Emperor of the east, and he governed them by an officer called an Exarch, who resided at Ravenna. The Goths under Alaric having laid waste Achaia, to the Peloponnesus, ravaged the borders of Italy. Stilicho, a valiant and able general, at the head of the armies of Honorius, opposed the invaders with success; but the timid Emperor purchased a dishonourable peace, by

^o A. D. 379. ^p A. D. 395.

yielding Achaia to Alaric. The Gothic general, reinforced by the Suevi, Alani and Vandals, marched to attack Rome. The promise of a large sum of gold to desist from his purpose having been broken by Honorius, the exasperated Goth, instigated by desire of revenge as well as plunder, advanced to the gates of the devoted city. So far from any resistance being made to his approach, the slaves and domestics of the senate, and nobles, favoured his design. He advanced into the city during the silence of the night; and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet. He encouraged his troops to secure the rewards of their valour, and to enrich themselves with the spoils of a wealthy and effeminate people, but he exhorted them to spare the lives of the unresisting citizens; and, as the Goths had been recently converted to Christianity, to respect the churches. Yet the slaughter made by the Pagan Huns, who served under Alaric, was dreadful; and they gave full scope to their lust and avarice. They guided their march by the conflagration of houses; many palaces were burned and plundered of their costly plate, gold, and jewels. At the end of six days they ceased from the work of devastation, and the Gothic camp exhibited a scene of complete triumph over the unhappy and degenerate Romans. The captives, the sons and daughters of senators and patricians, attended at the festive boards which were loaded with the

choicest viands, and presented draughts of Falerian wine to their haughty conquerors.

In the reign of Valentinian the third, Attila, at the head of 500,000 Huns, threatened complete destruction to the empire. The Emperor of the west, shut up within the walls of his capital, was compelled to purchase a disgraceful peace. In the reign of Augustulus, the final scene of Roman degradation was presented to the world: Odoacer, king of the Heruli, subdued Italy; and he spared the life of Augustulus, on the hard and humiliating condition of resigning his imperial crown.

The barbarous nations, who issued from the north of Europe and Asia, at various times, in such immense numbers, were drawn from their bleak hills and gloomy forests by every inducement which could stimulate their exertions. A sense of injury for the oppressions which many of them had endured from the Roman government, might operate in some degree upon them: but they felt stronger incentives in the prospect of plenty and plunder of the gold and treasure of a wealthy people; the fertility of Italy abounding in delicious fruits, and its genial and delightful climate.

As oft have issued host impelling host,
The blue eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields;

A. D. 476.

With

With grim delight the brood of winter view
 A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue;
 Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
 And quaff the pendant vintage as it grows^s.

Their progress was marked by blood and fire, by destruction to the monuments of the arts, and implacable hostility to civilized man. For nearly two centuries they continued the most desolating ravages, and the historians of that period are at a loss for descriptions sufficiently strong, or images sufficiently horrid, to represent its distress and calamity.

The great events of the rise, elevation, decline and fall of the Roman empire, rather exceed the compass of twelve centuries. Rome was founded by Romulus in the year 753 before Christ, and Augustulus resigned his crown to Odoacer in the year 476 of the Christian era. From the provinces of the empire arose those kingdoms which are now the most distinguished in the western world. Gaul and Spain were overrun by the Franks, Suevi, Burgundians, and Visigoths^t. The Saxons gained possession of South Britain^u; Pannonia and Illyricum were conquered by the Huns; Rhetia, Noricum, and Vindelicia, by the Ostrogoths. Successive hordes of barbarians ravaged Italy; the Ostrogoths expelled the Herulians, and were vanquished by the Lombards. In 743, the Exarchate

^s GRAY.^t A. D. 406.^u A. D. 449.

of Ravenna was added to their dominions, and this event completed the extinction of the Roman empire in Italy. Constantinople, which continued for some centuries to give a fading representation of imperial splendour, was finally taken by the Turks, with its dependent territories. The Roman empire resembled the Danube, which, after pouring a grand and impetuous flood, and receiving the supply of large rivers, is divided into various streams, before it mixes with the ocean.

The Romans, illustrious as they were for the dignity of their character, their martial prowess, and the extent of their empire, hold forth a splendid light for the guidance of mankind. Their virtues in the prosperity of the commonwealth, and their vices in its decline, furnish examples and cautions to persons of all succeeding times. In those kings and emperors, who were remarkable for excellence of character, monarchs may find examples worthy of their imitation; and commonwealths may be taught, from the disorders of their factions, what limits to prescribe to the ambition of the wealthy, and what curb to impose upon the licentiousness of the populace. To be conversant with this important history, is to view mankind engaged in the fullest exercise of patriotism, courage, and talents; or to contemplate them enervated by luxury, debased by corruption, and sunk into the most abject disgrace.

O Luxury

Bane of elated life, of affluent states,
What dreary change, what ruin is not thine?
How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind,
To the soft entrance of thy rosy bow'r
How dost thou lure the fortunate and great!
Dreadful attraction! while behind thee gapes
Th' unfathomable gulph, where Ashur lies
O'erwhelm'd, forgotten, and high-boasting Cham,
And Elam's haughty pomp, and beauteous Greece,
And the great Queen of Earth, imperial Rome^u.

In what manner the Romans declined from their greatest excellence of character, and how in the degeneracy of their manners they involved the decay of genius, our imperfect sketch of their history has shown. Let the natives of Britain, perusing the instructive lessons here presented to them, indulge the feelings of compassion for the weakness of human nature; and let them at the same time collect, from such edifying examples, new incitements to energy and perseverance in every public and private virtue.

^u DYER'S Fleece.

CHAPTER X.

The History of Modern Europe.

AS *Government* and *Laws* are rendered more conducive to general happiness in modern, than they ever were in ancient times; as the *Manners* of society have experienced a very great improvement in proportion to the wide diffusion of knowledge, and the facility of communication; as *Navigation* has enlarged the intercourse of mankind by the discovery of a new world; and as, moreover, the light of the Protestant Religion has dispelled much of the darkness of superstition in some nations, and beamed with splendour upon others; it must surely be a subject of pleasing enquiry, to investigate the leading causes, which have produced such extraordinary, such extensive, and such beneficial effects.

And when we examine these effects more closely, and consider that they have an immediate reference to our own situations in the world;—that they relate to the arts which *now* adorn, and the customs which *now* regulate, society;—to the institutions, which direct our conduct, model our manners, and influence our opinions, in all religious as well as civil affairs; the subject will rise to a much higher

degree of importance ;—we shall see our interest more strongly involved in it ; we shall prosecute our researches with a degree of ardour proportioned to its importance, and shall set its just value upon the history of modern Europe.

The most striking objects, which this history presents to us, are,

I. *The establishment and abolition of the Feudal System.* II. *The Crusades.* III. *The institution of Chivalry.* IV. *The Reformation.* V. *The revival of Classical Learning.* VI. *The progress of Navigation.*

To trace the historical outlines of those institutions, inventions, and discoveries, which discriminate the history of modern from that of ancient Europe, is our present design. To those eminent writers, who have discussed the respective subjects at large, we must refer for more complete information.

I. *The Feudal System.*

The inhabitants of the north of Europe and Asia, who issued in great multitudes from their native forests, during the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era, and who overturned the Roman empire, introduced a new species of government into the conquered countries, known by the name of

of the feudal system. It is very remarkable, that although the barbarians who framed it settled in their newly acquired territories at various times, were commanded by different leaders, and spoke different languages, yet the system was established, with little variation, in every country in Europe. This great uniformity is peculiarly striking, and has furnished some writers with an argument, that all these people sprung originally from the same stock. But the fact may, with more probability, be attributed to the similar state of their manners and the similar situation in which they were all placed on taking possession of their new domains^w.

The plan of the feudal system was this:—every soldier, upon receiving an allotment of land, bound himself to appear in arms against the common enemy, whenever he should be called upon by his commander. This military service was the condition upon which every vassal received, and the tenure by which he continued to possess his land, which was regarded as a kind of benefice; and this obligation was esteemed both easy and honourable, although the original idea of such a grant being a favour, and not a right, was never entirely lost. The same service which a vassal owed to his

^w This account of the Feudal System is taken from Robertson's Charles V. Hume's History of England, vol. ii. Appendix 2, and Hargrave's and Butler's Notes on Coke's Institute. The sketch which Tacitus has given of the Institutions of the antient Germans, contains the rudiments of the feudal establishment. De Moribus Germanorum, c. xi. xii. xiii.

lord, was due from a lord to his king. The king obliged those among whom he distributed the conquered lands, whether barons or knights, to repair to his standard with their retainers, in proportion to the extent of their respective estates, well armed and equipped, for a certain number of days, to assist him in all his wars. Thus a feudal kingdom, in its original constitution, conveys rather the idea of a military than a civil establishment. The victorious army taking their posts in different districts of a country, continued to be ranked under their proper officers, and to be subject to martial orders.

When William the Conqueror had subdued England, he gave to Hugh de Abrincis, his nephew, the whole county of Chester, which he erected into a palatinate. Robert, Earl of Mortaigne, had 973 manors and lordships; William, Earl Warrenne, had 298, and when one of his descendants was questioned as to his right to the lands which he possessed, he drew his sword, which he produced as his title, adding, that William the Bastard did not conquer the kingdom himself, but that the barons, and his ancestor among the rest, were joint adventurers in the enterprise.

The possession of land thus obtained, soon ceased to be precarious; it seemed reasonable, that he who had cultivated and sowed a field should reap the harvest; hence the occupation of a portion of land, or a fief, as it was called in the feudal language,
was

was soon made annual:—as a reward for long and faithful services they were soon granted for life;—and as it was observed that a soldier would in battle risk his life more willingly, if confident that his family would continue to enjoy his estate, fiefs were allowed to descend from father to son. Thus the institution of permanent property was ingrafted upon that of military service, and each century made some addition to the stability of these tenures.

In this manner the great vassals of the crown acquired that land as unalienable property, which was originally a grant during pleasure; and with it they secured proportionable authority and power, and a kind of sovereign jurisdiction both civil and criminal, within their own domains. The baron, exhibiting the show of royalty, and surrounded by the officers of his household and court of justice, resided in his principal castle, which was a strong and well garrisoned fortress. There he frequently feasted his retainers, with all the rude hospitality of the times, in his spacious hall, amused them with tilts and tournaments, attached them to his service by the ties of dependence and personal attention, and they were ready to draw their swords and devote their lives to his service. He was often involved in some hereditary or personal quarrel with his neighbouring chieftains, or formed a confederacy with them to decide some contest with a rival power. Sometimes they led their vassals in hostile array against the king himself, a circumstance which frequently happened in the reign of John,

John, Henry III., and the civil wars of the houses of York and Lancaster.

The rights which this institution conferred were important. The lord could levy money from his vassals to supply his necessities; during the minority of the heir to an estate, he could appropriate the rents of the lands, and dispose of an heir, or heiress in marriage, as he pleased. Every kingdom was broken into such baronies, and these baronies into inferior fiefs or knight's fees.

In the reign of Stephen, king of England, not less than a thousand castles, with their dependent domains, are said to have covered the southern parts of Britain. The common people were kept in a state of *villainage*, or slavery. The peasant, or *serf*, was considered as the mere produce of the farm, as much as the cattle, and had no more rights or privileges than the lowest slaves in the West Indies. These circumstances gave the feudal government a strong tendency towards aristocracy, and reduced the authority of every monarch in Europe to such a degree, that he possessed little more than the empty title of the *sovereign lord*, and was frequently exposed to the insolence or the hostility of his barons. His influence was derived from the royal demesnes, or crown lands, more than his general authority.

In modern times it seems reasonable that the king should command the services of any of his subjects

subjects for a just cause, more particularly in a case where the legal succession to the crown is concerned; but the following anecdote will shew that this principle could have no influence upon the strict and proper interpretation of feudal obligations. Previously to the departure of St. Louis for the Crusade, he summoned an assembly of his barons to attend him, and required them to swear, that in case of his decease during the expedition, they would be loyal and true to his son. Joinville, his historian, a feudatory of the Count of Champagne, though he felt the greatest attachment to the king, refused, on account of his vassalage to the Count, to take the oath; his words were, "he asked me the question, but I would not take the oath, because I was not his man *."

There were many lands which were *allodial*, or free, but they were in time absorbed in the feudal system. The possessors soon found themselves in an inferior condition: the feudatories were united under one chieftain, and by their mutual attachment had the same advantages over the proprietors of the other which a regular army enjoys over a dispersed multitude, and were enabled to commit with impunity all injuries against their defenceless neighbours. Every one, therefore, sought for such protection; and each allodial proprietor resigning his possessions into the hands of the king, or some

* Il le me demanda, mais je ne vox faire point de serement, car je n'estoie pas son home.

powerful baron, received them back on condition of the feudal services, which, though they laid him under a heavy burthen, at least ensured him protection, and the secure occupation of his lands. The attachment of vassals to their chieftain was still supported by the cause from which it arose; the necessity of mutual protection and the continued intercourse of benefits and services between the lord and his vassals. One of the most striking points of difference between the feudal and the Roman law, was the rule with respect to succession to property. The latter allowed to the eldest son no particular preference; whereas the feudal law allowed him several very important rights. In England, primogeniture obtained in military fiefs as early as the reign of the Conqueror: but with this qualification, that where the father had several fiefs, the first only belonged to the eldest son. In the reign of Henry II. the right of the eldest prevailed absolutely in military fiefs; and in that of Henry III. the same absolute right obtained in *focage* lands. The eldest son, in the consideration of the law, was the representative of the fee; and the reason seems to rise naturally out of the feudal constitution, that among many sons, he should enjoy the estate who was first old enough to defend it, and was first able to execute the commands of his lord. However unjust such a preference may be with respect to the division of property, it is eminently advantageous in preventing disputes as to the succession to the crown.

Such

Such a state of society as this, exhibiting only the two extremes of despotic power and servitude, was replete with evils. It was as hostile to the intellectual as to the moral improvement of the mind. During its prevalence, the arts and sciences were banished, mankind were sunk in gross ignorance, and the light of Christianity was obscured in the thickest clouds of superstition. The constant exercise of unlimited power hardened the minds of the nobles, the yoke of vassalage debased the spirit of the people, and the amplest scope was allowed for the predominance of the malignant passions, and every kind of ferocity and violence. Accordingly a greater number of those atrocious actions which fill the mind with astonishment and horror, occur in the history of the early feudal times, than in that of any period of equal extent in the annals of Europe.

Such was the state of society from the seventh to the eleventh century. From that period may be dated the regular course of improvement in government, laws, and manners. We shall soon notice the favourable effects of the Crusades and of Chivalry upon the feudal system. In succeeding times a variety of causes began to operate, which softened the rigour of the feudal service, and diminished the power of the barons. The payment of fines called *scutage* money was accepted by the king, instead of personal service in the field, for the mutual accommodation of himself and his vassals; and his army was composed of mercenaries, supported

ported partly by the revenues arising from these fines. Thus monarchs acquired more effectual authority; no longer regarded their nobles as their equals, or found it necessary to have recourse to feeble efforts to control their power. They began not only to hold the sceptre, but to brandish the sword; and had more complete means to check the designs of their barons by intimidation, or punish their rebellion by force of arms.

Charles the seventh of France, prompted by his desire of expelling the English from France in the year 1445, was the first monarch who established a standing army; he retained a large body of forces in his service, and appointed funds for their regular payment. Many of the principal nobility soon resorted to his standard, and looked up to him as the judge, and the rewarder of merit. The connexion between them was strengthened, and the feudal militia, who were only occasionally called out, were in time superseded by foldiers accustomed to long and regular service. This example of breaking the independent power of the barons was followed by the politic Henry VII. of England. He undermined that edifice, which it was not prudent to attack with open force. By judicious laws he permitted his nobles to cut off the entail of their estates, and to sell them. He prohibited them from keeping numerous bands of retainers, which had rendered them formidable to his predecessors. By encouraging agriculture and commerce, and all the arts of peace during a long reign, and by enforcing
a vigo-

a vigorous, impartial, and general execution of the laws, he not only removed many immediate evils resulting from the feudal system, but provided against their return. The influence of his salutary plans was gradually felt, and they contributed more and more, in process of time, to establish good government, to repress the arrogance of the higher, and to improve the condition of the middle and inferior classes of his subjects, by freeing them from the yoke of petty tyrants, and imparting to them the principal advantages of liberty.

II. *The Crusades.*

Few expeditions are more extraordinary than those which were undertaken for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Turks by the crusades. They took the name of crusaders, or *Croisés* from the cross which they wore on their shoulders in gold, silk, or cloth. In the first crusade all were red; in the third, the French alone preserved that colour, while green crosses were adopted by the Flemings, and white by the English. Each company likewise bore a standard, on which was painted a cross. If we consider the great numbers of Europeans, who were engaged in them, or their long and obstinate perseverance in the same design, notwithstanding numerous hardships, losses, and defeats; and if we reflect upon the important consequences, with which these enterprises were attended, both to themselves and their descendants; the

the history of the crusades, including a period of one hundred and seventy-five years, from A. D. 1095 to 1270, will be found to deserve particular regard, and to follow in proper order our survey of the feudal system^y.

From the æra of the crusades may be traced the diffusion of several kinds of knowledge ; and from the communication of the western with the eastern nations, arose a succession of causes, which with different degrees of influence, and with more or less rapidity, contributed to introduce order and improvement into society.

Judea, or the holy land, was the highest object of veneration to the Christians of the middle ages. There had lived the Son of God ; there he had performed the most astonishing miracles ; and there he had suffered death for the sins of the world. His holy sepulchre was preserved at Jerusalem ; and as a degree of veneration was annexed to this consecrated place, nearly approaching to idolatry, a visit to it was regarded as the most meritorious service, which could be paid to heaven ; and it was eagerly frequented by crowds of pilgrims from every part of Europe. If it be natural to the human

^y The authorities for my account may be found in the Universal History, book 1. c. 2. b. 23. c. 5. &c. Pauli Æmilii Gesta. Francorum. Gibbon's Decline and Fall, wherever he has good authority to support his statements, v. 6. c. 59. &c. Knolles's History of the Turks ; the History of Modern Europe, and Robertson's Charles V.

mind to survey those spots, which have been the abodes of illustrious persons, or the scenes of great transactions, with delight, what must have been the veneration with which the Christians of those times, the ruling passion of whose mind was religious enthusiasm, regarded a country, which the Almighty had selected as the residence of his beloved Son, and the place where that Son had shed his precious blood, to expiate the sins, and accomplish the redemption of mankind? The zealous travellers who made a pilgrimage to Palestine were long exposed to the insults, extortions, and cruelty of the Infidels: but at length their complaints roused the Europeans to attempt their expulsion.

The First Crusade from A. D. 1095 to 1099.

Peter surnamed the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, was the most zealous and indefatigable promoter of this first expedition. He was a man of acute understanding and keen observation; in the garb of a Pilgrim he had visited the holy sepulchre, and had noticed the insults and hardships to which the Christians were exposed. He brought letters from the patriarch of Jerusalem to Pope Urban the second, in which their sufferings were described in the most pathetic terms, and the Christian states of Europe were exhorted to redress their grievances, and retaliate upon their Infidel Tyrants, from an apprehension that the Turks, more
ferocious

ferocious and more subtle than the Saracens, were aiming at universal empire. The ambassadors of the Greek Emperor Alexius Comnenus represented in the council of Placentia, to the numerous Bishops and Clergy there assembled, the imminent danger of their master, and his capital, from the vicinity of the Turks. The Pope afterwards, in a great council held at Clermont, enlarged upon the same topics, and stated that the desire of the Turks for empire could only be satisfied with the conquest of the whole world. The indignation and the ardour of persons of all ranks were excited, and they resolved to commence the expedition to the holy land without delay. Peter the Hermit with sandals on his feet, and a rope round his waist, led the way: Great numbers of devotees, chiefly composed of peasants, neither furnished with necessities, nor regulated by discipline, followed his steps. Their ignorance magnified the hopes and lessened the dangers of the undertaking. In the forests of Hungary and Bulgaria, many of them fell a sacrifice to the indignation of the inhabitants, provoked by their rapine and plunder. A pyramid of bones, erected by Solyman, the Emperor of the Turks, near the city of Nice, marked the spot where many of those who penetrated farther than their companions, had been defeated; and of the first Crusaders very great numbers are said to have perished, before a single city was taken from the infidels.

These

These misfortunes were so far from extinguishing, that they rather tended to increase the enthusiasm of the Christians. The most eminent chieftains of the age, renowned for their prowess in arms, engaged in the crusade without delay. Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Brabant, a descendant of the Emperor Charlemagne, with his two brothers, Eustace and Baldwin, Hugh Count of Vermandois, brother to the king of France, Robert Duke of Normandy, eldest son of William the Conqueror king of England, Robert Count of Flanders, Stephen Count of Blois, one of the richest and most powerful princes of that age, the number of whose castles equalled that of the days of the year, were the leaders of the French, the Norman, and the English forces. Adhemar the legate of the Pope, and Raimond, Count of Thoulouse, took the command of those who went from the south of France, Lombardy, and Spain; Bohemond, and his cousin, the accomplished Tancred princes of the Norman race, were accompanied by several nobles of that province. They were followed by their numerous adherents and vassals, whose services were either prompted by zeal and attachment to their respective lords, or purchased with rewards and promises.

Their principal force was cavalry, chiefly composed of gentlemen invested with the honour of knighthood. When their collected forces were mustered upon the plains of Bithynia, the knights and their martial attendants amounted to 100,000

fighting men, completely armed with the helmet and coat of mail. The Princess Anna the daughter of the Greek Emperor compared their numbers, but much in the stile of eastern exaggeration, to locusts, to leaves of trees, or the sand of the sea.

Constantinople was at that time the largest, as well as the most beautiful city in Europe. It alone retained the image of ancient manners and arts. It was the place where manufactures of the most curious fabric were wrought, and was the mart of Europe for all the commodities of the east. This seat of empire, elegance, and magnificence was appointed as a general rendezvous for all the crusaders. Several contemporary writers were witnesses to this singular assembly of different nations, and they have given a lively picture of the characters and manners of each people. When the polite natives of the metropolis of the east speak of the northern warriors, they describe them as barbarous, illiterate, fierce, and savage; and they sometimes inveigh against them with great severity, and relate instances of their violence, in terms not unlike those which preceding historians had employed in describing the incursions of the Goths and Vandals, when they overturned the Roman empire. On the other hand, the crusaders, while they despised the effeminate manners and unwarlike character of the Greeks, were surpris'd at the wealth and magnificence of their metropolis.

The

The progress of the Crusaders was attended by many flattering instances of success. They took Nice, at that time the capital of the Turkish empire, the seat of Sultan Solyman in Asia Minor, and they defeated him in two pitched battles. After crossing mount Taurus, they besieged Antioch, a place of great strength. Before the capture of that important place, many of their troops were lost by famine, and after it, many perished by pestilence: but undismayed by these misfortunes, they continued their zealous career. The lofty walls of Jerusalem at length struck their eyes, and as soon as they beheld this hallowed object of their affections, they raised a general shout of joy, and then devoutly fell prostrate on their faces, and kissed the ground whereon the Redeemer of mankind had deigned to tread. The city was strong both by nature and art, and defended by the Saracen Caliph of Egypt, at the head of a garrison well appointed, and more numerous than the Christian army. Forty days were employed in the siege, at the end of which they took the city by storm: In the ardour of rage and victory they put multitudes of Jews and Turks to the sword, and such was their thirst for the extirpation of the Infidels, that according to the candid account which Godfrey himself gives of the transaction, so great was the slaughter of the enemy, in the temple of Solomon, that his men stood in blood above the ankles. They then walked with naked feet in solemn procession to the holy sepulchre, there to return thanks for so great a victory. The Arabian

writers assert that they continued the massacre of the Turks in the adjacent country for several weeks together, and assembling all the Jews, burned them in their temple. The Latin historians are very far from contradicting these statements, nor do they relate any instances of clemency on this occasion. On Robert Duke of Normandy declining the honour, Godfrey of Bouillon, the most worthy of the Champions of Christendom, was proclaimed king of Jerusalem. In imitation of his Saviour, he was crowned with thorns; he rejected the appendages of royalty, and contented himself with the modest title of Defender and Baron of the holy sepulchre. A.D. 1099. Many of his companions returned to Europe, and his short reign, which continued only for one year, did not give him time to establish his new kingdom. The conquests acquired in this first Crusade were comprised within the small territory of Jerusalem, the dominion of which lasted rather longer than fourscore years. The principality of Antioch and Edessa, extending over Mesopotamia, possessed by Bohemond, and retained about forty years, and the Tiberiad assigned to Tancred. Encouraged by such delusive prospects of establishing a Christian empire in the holy land, the Pope and the Clergy continued to recommend this sacred war with increased ardour. It was still represented to the people as the cause of God and of Christ, in which death would confer the merit of martyrdom, and paradise would be equally the reward of defeat, or of victory.

The Second Crusade A. D. 1147.

Forty eight years after the deliverance of Jerusalem the second crusade was undertaken. St. Bernard, famed for his eloquence and piety, and the great influence, which he obtained amongst the people, flourished at the beginning of the twelfth century. Armed with the authority of Pope Eugene III. he fanned the flame of military fanaticism. With a voice, that was in every place obeyed without delay, he called the nations to the protection of the holy sepulchre. The fame of his pretended miracles and predictions removed every doubt of success from the minds of his credulous hearers; insomuch, that all who were able to bear arms were eager to participate in the glory of this warfare. Bernard was invited by the Bishops and Nobles of France to become a leader in the expedition, which he so zealously recommended; but the Pope would not allow him to accept the flattering offer. The event proved him more fortunate in advancing the interests of the Church, than in the success of his projects, or the fulfilment of his predictions. The court of Rome profited by his labours, and canonized his memory. Conrad III. emperor of Germany, and Louis VII. king of France, were the principal leaders in the second crusade^z. From the hands of Bernard they re-

^z A. D. 1147.

ceived the cross, with assurances, that he had authority from heaven to promise them victory. Their cavalry was composed of one hundred and forty thousand knights, and their immediate attendants; and if even the light-armed troops, the women and children, the priests and monks, be excluded from the computation of their effective forces, their number will arise to four hundred thousand souls.

Manuel, the emperor of the Greeks, is accused by his own subjects of giving intelligence of the plans of the crusaders to the Turkish Sultan, and of providing them with treacherous guides. The conduct of the Christian leaders was dictated by no sound policy, or vigorous co-operation. Instead of endeavouring to crush the common foe by a preconcerted attack at the same time on different sides of his territories, Louis of France had scarcely passed the Bosphorus, when he was met by the returning Emperor, who had lost the greatest part of his army in a battle on the banks of the Meander. The king of France advanced through the same country to a similar fate; and was glad to shelter the relics of his army in the sea-port of Satalia. At Jerusalem these unfortunate monarchs met to lament their sad reverses of fortune. The slender remnants of their armies were joined to the Christian powers of Syria; and a fruitless siege of Damascus was the final effort of the second crusade.

The Third Crusade A. D. 1190.

The great Saladin the Sultan of Egypt and Syria, encouraged by the inactivity or weakness of the Christian princes, reconquered the kingdom of Jerusalem, and after a fierce siege of fourteen days took the holy city itself, and planted upon its walls the banner of Mahomet. He treated Sybilla the Queen, a descendant of Count Baldwin and her consort Guy of Lusignan, his captives, with kindness, and allowed his Christian prisoners their liberty on condition of paying a moderate ransom. By the report of these disasters the zealous princes of Europe were again roused to arms, and Frederic Barbarossa Emperor of Germany, Richard Cœur de Lion king of England, and Philip Augustus king of France, resolved to retrieve the honour of the Christian arms. They were reinforced not only by the fleets of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice, but with the warriors of Flanders and Denmark, remarkable for their lofty stature and the use of the battle axe. With Lusignan at their head they besieged the city of Acre, thirty miles to the south of Tyre, and about seventy from Jerusalem. The siege, which continued for two years, was remarkable for nine battles fought by the united Moslems of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, and the Christians in the neighbourhood of mount Carmel. The camp of the Christians was wasted by famine, and Saladin heard with joy that the emperor of Germany had

died in his march. The English fleet, assailed by a violent storm, was driven on the coast of Cyprus. Isaac Comnenus, the despot of the place, pillaged the stranded ships, and threw the sailors into prison: but the gallant Richard took ample vengeance for this act of inhumanity: he attacked the plunderer who opposed his landing, took him prisoner, and loaded him with chains; he entered Lemisso his capital by storm, and conferred the command of the island upon Guy of Lusignan the expelled king of Jerusalem. At length however the fleets of Richard, and of Philip, cast anchor in the bay of Acre, and they had the joint honour of taking the place. A capitulation was granted on condition of a ransom of 200,000 pieces of gold, the deliverance of 100 nobles, and 1500 inferior captives, and the restoration of the wood of the genuine cross of Christ. The delay in the execution of the treaty enflamed the rage of the conquerors, and three thousand Turks are said to have been beheaded, almost in the view of the Sultan, by the orders of Richard.

Soon after the surrender of Acre, Philip quitted Palestine, and Richard Cœur de Lion had the chief command, and added the cities of Cæsarea and Jaffa to the kingdom of Lusignan. He led the main body of the Christian army at the battle of Ascalon against Saladin and his numerous host. The two wings were broken in the beginning of the fight by the impetuous Sultan, but Richard renewed the attack with admirable intrepidity and conduct,

conduct, and turned the fortune of the contest to a complete victory. He advanced within a day's march of Jerusalem, and intercepted a caravan of 7000 camels. Roused by a report that Jaffa was surprised by Saladin, he sailed for the place, and leaped first upon the shore. The Saracens and Turks fled before him in wild dismay. On the following morning they returned, and found him carelessly encamped with only 17 knights and 300 Archers: regardless of their numbers, he sustained their charge, and grasping his lance rode along their front, without meeting a single adversary who dared to oppose his career,

In the course of this active campaign, some circumstances occurred to soften the rigour of hostilities. Even presents were exchanged by the courteous warriors, and snow and fruit were given by Saladin and Norway hawks were exchanged for Arabian horses. The health of both Saladin and Richard began to decline, and each wished to return to his own dominions. Richard especially was eager to depart for Europe, as the perfidious Philip, in violation of his solemn oath, had taken advantage of his absence to invade Normandy, then a province of England. A treaty was concluded on condition, that Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre should be open without tribute or molestation to the Latin Pilgrims; that the Christians should possess the sea coast from Jaffa to Tyre; and that for three years and three months all hostilities should cease. The English monarch informed Saladin,

ladin, that he might depend upon his return to try his fortune once more in the holy land; the sultan, with a degree of courtesy, which would have done honour to the most refined age, replied, that if it must be his misfortune to lose that part of his dominions, he had rather lose it to the king of England, than to any other monarch in the world. The death of Saladin not long after inspired the Christians with no small exultation, as he had obstructed the career of their conquests more than any General who had ever been opposed to them. He was exemplary for his piety and his temperance. His drink was water only, and he wore a coarse woollen garment. Such was his cool intrepidity and religious zeal, that it was his custom to peruse the Koran on horseback between approaching armies. During his last illness, he ordered his shroud to be carried through the city, while a crier went before the procession, and proclaimed with a loud voice, "This is all that remains to the mighty Saladin, the conqueror of the East." Liberality was a distinguishing feature in his character; he gave away twelve thousand horses at the siege of Acre; and at his death no more than forty-seven pieces of silver and one of gold were found in his treasury.

As Richard Cœur de Lion was on his return home, he was shipwrecked near Aquileia. He travelled in the habit of a pilgrim, but the liberality of his expences betrayed him, and he was thrown into prison by Leopold, Duke of Austria, whom he had offended

offended at the siege of Acre. This sordid prince sold him to the Emperor, Henry the VIth, who had taken offence at Richard's alliance with the King of Sicily. The place of his captivity was carefully concealed by his enemies, but it was discovered by Blondel, a provençal bard and minstrel, who had shared his friendship and his bounty. Having travelled over many parts of Europe to learn the fate of his beloved master, the active Blondel at length gained intelligence, that in a certain castle in Germany a noble prisoner was confined, and closely guarded. The gates of the castle were barred against him, but he was determined to try an expedient for making the desired discovery. He chaunted with a loud voice some verses of a song, which had been composed partly by Richard and partly by himself; and to his unspeakable joy, when he paused, the second part was continued by the royal captive. This discovery is said to have led to his release. Vain were the remonstrances of the Bishops of Normandy to the Pope in his behalf, exhorting him to draw the sword of St. Peter against the Emperor, for doing violence to one of the bravest foldiers of the church. And as ineffectual for some time were the spirited letters of Eleanora, the mother of Richard, to the Pope. The mercenary Emperor at last, not influenced by the Pope's threat of excommunication, but by the offer of a large ransom, restored Richard to liberty, A. D. 1194, after the captivity of a year. Pierced by an arrow at the siege of the castle of Châlons, his death happened about five years after, A. D.

1199. His formidable name is said to have been continued in proverbial sayings in the east. It was used for sixty years after by the Syrian mother to silence her child; and the rider was wont to exclaim to his starting horse, dost thou think King Richard is in that bush? The Arabian historians have added to his fame, and mention him as one of the bravest champions of the cross.

The exploits of the crusaders, and especially of Richard Cœur de Lion, may be thought to resemble the marvellous stories of romantic times: Yet what has happened in our own days, and even upon the spot where Richard displayed his valour as a warrior of the cross, may be adduced as a strong proof of their truth. Before the walls of Acre, the Turks have again witnessed the perseverance and intrepidity of Britons; for there “the dauntless seaman,” with his few brave associates in danger and glory, stopped the progress of a French army, and compelled *their leader*, baffled and astonished at courage, not surpassed even by the crusaders of Britain, to desist from his darling enterprise, and abandon the conquest of Syria^b.

The

^a “ Ye fainted spirits of the warrior dead,
Whose giant force Britannia’s armies led,
Whose bick’ring falchions, foremost in the fight,
Still pour’d confusion on the Soldan’s might;
Lords of the biting axe, and beamy spear,
Wide conqu’ring Edward, Lion Richard, hear!
At Albion’s call your crested pride resume,
And burst the slumbers of the marble tomb:

Your

The Fourth Crusade, 1202.

The French commanded by Baldwin, Count of Flanders, in alliance with the Venetians, embarked in the fourth crusade. They espoused the cause of the young Alexius, the son of the deposed Emperor Isaac. Constantinople was taken by the inferior army of the crusaders, and the timid usurper, basely deserting his fair daughter Irene, and his subjects, carrying away much treasure, privately retreated through the Bosphorus. The old Emperor was restored to his throne only to be again loaded with chains by Alexius Ducas, a relation, who put him and his son to death, and

Your sons, behold! in arm, in heart the same,
 Still press the footsteps of parental fame,
 To Salem still their gen'rous aid supply,
 And pluck the palm of Syrian chivalry.
 When he from tow'ry Malta's yielding isle,
 And the green waters of reluctant Nile,
 Th' Apostate Chief, from Misraim's subject shore
 To Acre's walls, his trophied banners bore:
 When the pale desert mark'd his proud array,
 And desolation hop'd an ampler sway,
 What hero then triumphant Gaul dismay'd?
 What arm repell'd the victor renegade?
 Britannia's champion!—Bath'd in hostile blood,
 High on the breach the dauntless Seaman stood:
 Admiring Asia saw th' unequal fight,
 E'en the pale Crescent bless'd the Christian's might."

Palestine, an Oxford Prize Poem, by Mr. Reginald Heber, 1803.

assumed

assumed the imperial purple. With the consent of the tumultuous populace, the Latins, to revenge these atrocities, again attacked the city; and such was the terror of the Greeks on their approach, that Nicetas, one of their historians, relates that the thousands of troops, who guarded the Emperor's person, fled at the approach of a single French hero. The conquerors, unmoved by the solemn procession and abject supplications of the Greek priests, indulged in the licence allowed to those who take a city by storm, except the effusion of blood. They divided from a common stock the gold, silver, silks, velvets, furs, gems, and spices, and other treasures of the most splendid city in the world, 1204. They profaned the sacred vessels and ornaments of the churches by common use, melted down the beautiful antique statues of brass into money for the payment of their troops, and in the true spirit of the age reserved the heads, bones, crosses, and images of saints as the most precious trophies of their conquest. The Greek provinces were divided among the victorious crusaders of Venice, France, and Lombardy. Dandolo, the Doge of Venice, who had taken a most active part in the enterprise, was proclaimed governor of Romania, and ended at Constantinople his glorious life. Five Latin Emperors of the houses of Flanders and Courtenay, succeeded to the imperial throne, and Constantinople was for sixty years in possession of the Latins. Few of the conquerors recollected their original solemn engagement to succour Jerusalem, and only those repaired

repaired thither, who could gain none of the spoils of the Greeks. Some of the Imperial family of the Comneni preserved the wreck of the empire, and founded two small kingdoms, one at Nice in Bithynia, the other at Trebifond, between the sea and mount Caucasus. They took Villehardouin, prince of Achaia, prisoner, and thus deprived the Latins of their most powerful vassal. The Genoese took part with the Greeks, and some Greek peasants engaged in a stratagem to admit a party of foldiers by a secret way into the city. They succeeded, set it on fire in four places, and caused Baldwin, the affrighted Emperor, precipitately to fly with Justinian the patriarch, and some of his friends, 1261. Michael Palæologus, with the Empress his wife, and his little son Andronicus, entered the city in solemn procession on foot by the golden gate, and regained the throne. He caused Alexius Cæsar his general, by whose address and bravery he had recovered it, to be carried in triumph. He wore a crown scarcely inferior to the imperial diadem, and his statue was placed upon a lofty pillar.

The Fifth Crusade, 1207.

This furnished, at its commencement, another instance of the Christians assuming the badge of the cross, not against infidels, but against those who professed the same faith with themselves. Innocent the Third, who established the inquisition, and to whose Legate John King of England resigned

signed his crown, instigated Simon de Montford, at the head of a great army, to extirpate the Albigenses who were stigmatized as heretics. He likewise excited Andrew King of Hungary, and John de Brienne, to make a crusade to Egypt, where their camp was inundated by the crafty Sultan; and they were happy to capitulate for a secure, but disgraceful return to Europe, on condition of not invading Egypt for eight years.

*The Sixth and Seventh Crusades, A.D. 1249
and 1270.*

The two last crusades were undertaken by Louis, the ninth King of France, commonly called St. Louis, as he was canonized after his death; he was a prince eminent for his love of justice, and his strict impartiality in adjusting the claims of the neighbouring states, who, from his well known honour, frequently appealed to his decisions. His virtues however were clouded by the fanatical spirit of the times, and the ardour with which he twice encountered the infidels was by no means inferior to any of his predecessors. With a fleet of 1800 ships, and a well appointed army of 50,000 men, he made an expedition to the coast of Egypt. At the first assault he took Damietta, but this was the only trophy of his conquest, for advancing along the banks of the Nile, his troops were harassed by the Egyptian gallies and the Arabs of the desert. They intercepted all provisions, and his army, re-
duced

duced by sickness and famine, were obliged to surrender: all who could not redeem their lives by service or ransom were inhumanly massacred, and the walls of Cairo were covered with Christian heads. The King was loaded with chains; but the conqueror, a descendant of Saladin, sent him a robe of honour, and ransomed him and his nobles, on condition that Damietta should be restored, and a vast sum of gold should be paid. The King of France, with the relics of his army, was permitted to embark for Palestine, where he passed four years without being able to efface the impression of his military disgrace.

After a repose of sixteen years he undertook the last of the crusades. He steered for the coast of Africa, accompanied by his three sons, his nephew, and the great lords of his court, either to punish the King of Tunis for interrupting the free passage of the Mediterranean, or to convert him to the Christian faith. On the barren sands of Africa, his army, sinking under the heat of a burning sun, was quickly reduced to small numbers, and the King expired in his tent. His brother the King of Sicily arrived soon after, and saved the relics of the gallant crusaders from destruction. His son Philip, named the Hardy, defeated the King of Tunis, and after making a truce, in which it was stipulated that the Moors should pay a double tribute for fifteen years, and the Christian missionaries should be allowed to preach in his dominions,

which were conditions imposed to save the honour of these crusaders, he returned to Europe.

That these wars were upon the whole disastrous and unfortunate, can be no subject of surprise, when we consider the manners and the dispositions of those who engaged in them, and the great and numerous difficulties with which they were obliged to contend. Their plans were always uniform; and, in their projects for the future, they rarely profited by the failure of the past.

The remoteness of Palestine from Europe, and the nature of the climate, ought likewise not to be disregarded. The crusaders, whether they marched by way of Constantinople, or embarked from the ports of Italy, if we consider their inexperience in remote expeditions, must have been greatly diminished in numbers, and weakened by fatigue, before they reached the field of action. The burning heat of Syria, the want of provisions, the scarcity of water, and the consequent diseases must have deprived them of much of that energy and vigour, so essentially necessary to their success. They were opposed by intrepid and active foes, as enthusiastic in the cause of their Prophet, as the Christians were in behalf of their Redeemer: acting in concert, superior in the various arts of war, fighting in their own country, and able to avail themselves of all its resources.

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These wars display in the strongest light the influence of the Papal power. The Popes instigated the princes of Europe to conquer new kingdoms, in order to enlarge the dominions of the holy see, regulated even beyond the boundaries of the ocean the conduct of emperors and kings, and thus exercised a supreme and universal sovereignty.

If we endeavour to trace the various causes, which led to the crusades, we shall find that the passions and prejudices of the Europeans of the middle ages conspired to impel them to Palestine, without any consideration of the injustice, rashness, or impolicy of their conduct.

Vain would it have been for any enlightened Christian at that time to have urged, in order to prevent the effusion of blood, that the crusaders had no right to wrest Judea from the hands of its possessors; and that their zeal for the recovery of Bethlehem, the place where the Son of God was born, or Mount Calvary, where he was crucified, could not justify their violation of the moral precepts of his Gospel. As vain would it have proved to represent the little advantage, or rather the certain loss, which would accrue to the monarchs, who embarked in these expeditions, both by leaving their dominions exposed to the invasion of their insidious enemies, and by draining their dominions of the blood and treasure of their subjects, which might have been profitably employed in the improvement of their native country. To such ar-

guments as these the crusaders would not have listened; the cause was too deeply implicated with their darling passions and prejudices, to be decided by an appeal to sober reason, or the genuine dictates of Christianity.

Their religious enthusiasm was greatly augmented by their love of war. Commerce, manufactures, and arts, were at that time in a state of infancy, and the mass of the people were destitute of regular employments. They eagerly caught at any occasion, which relieved them from a state of inactivity, and afforded room for the indulgence of their favourite inclinations. In the time of the crusades, chivalry began to flourish; and those knights, who were impelled with a romantic desire to travel in quest of adventures, turned their eyes with eagerness to Asia, which promised to open such new scenes of enterprize and glory, as could not be found in Europe. Persons of every rank flattered themselves with the most sanguine expectations of conquest, were confident that victory would attend their steps, and that they should return home loaded with the gold and silver, the diamonds, silks, and other spoils of the East.

The great privileges granted to the crusaders may serve to account for the long continuance of this spirit of adventure. The Popes proclaimed a complete indulgence and pardon for crimes to every one who would take up arms in the cause. Of this offer the profligate took advantage, and
eagerly

eagerly embraced a profession, which placed war, plunder, and conquest, in the list of duties. If they succeeded in this undertaking, they were assured that abundant riches would enable them to live happily on earth; and if they fell victims to a service so meritorious, they were persuaded that the gates of heaven would be open to them, and that they should obtain the crown of martyrdom.

There was another motive, which operated as a strong inducement to the multitudes who assumed the badge of the Cross. At the close of the tenth, and the beginning of the eleventh century, it was the prevailing opinion, that the world would shortly come to an end, and that the Saviour of mankind would make his second appearance on mount Calvary. This was the subject of extensive alarm and anxious expectation; and the pilgrims to the Holy Land set out from Europe, with a determination to die there, or to wait the advent of the Lord.

When we consider these various causes, we shall be less surprised at the vast multitudes who resorted to the standard of the Cross, erected in the first crusade by Urban the second, or who afterwards, regardless of the defeats and losses of their predecessors, trod in their steps to meet the same fate.

Various advantages, most of which were neither foreseen nor expected by the agents themselves,

were derived from the holy wars. Rude and ignorant as the crusaders were, they could not travel through and continue in so many interesting countries with indifference ; or behold their various customs and institutions, without acquiring information and improvement. Among the Greeks they surveyed the productions of the fine arts, and the precious remains of antiquity, the magnificence of the eastern court, and the models of extensive and curious manufactories. In Asia they beheld the traces of the knowledge and arts, which the patronage of the Caliphs had diffused through their empire. Every object which struck their attention pointed out a far higher state of improvement than their own countries had reached ; every object, therefore, while it produced the wonder of them all, could not fail to excite a spirit of imitation among those who were active and ingenious. As these new scenes presented themselves, their eyes were gradually opened to a more extensive prospect of the world, and they acquired new modes of thinking, felt a sense of new wants, and a taste for new gratifications.

It is a remark justified by the experience of ages, that the inhabitants of the western world are distinguished by peculiar acuteness of mind, and an active and imitative spirit. In the course of their expeditions, they acquired a taste for the arts and sciences ; and the example of the Arabian and Syrian merchants taught them the value of trade, and the use of several manufactures. In
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the superior refinements of Cairo and Constantinople, they discovered various commodities worth importing into Europe. From this period may be dated the introduction of silk and sugar, which were conveyed into Italy from Greece and Egypt; and the advantages which resulted from a more enlarged and adventurous traffic to the Pisans, the Genoese, and the Venetians, who laid the foundation of the modern commercial system. The crusaders began that intercourse with the East, which under the pacific forms of commerce has continued with little interruption ever since. On their return to Europe, they introduced a new taste in buildings, a more superb display of magnificence on public occasions, the rich manufactures of Asia, and the first improvements in learning and science.

The most beneficial effects of the crusades were visible in the alteration, which they occasioned in the state of property, by the emancipation of vassals from the tyranny of their lords, and by increasing the independence of the feudal tenants. Many of the great barons, unable to support the expences incurred by their expeditions to Palestine, sold their lands. The monarchs of different countries embraced these opportunities to annex considerable territories to their own domains, and purchased them at a small expence. The fiefs likewise of those barons, who died in the holy wars without heirs, reverted to their respective sovereigns; and by these possessions being taken from one scale,

and thrown into the other, the regal power increased in proportion as that of the nobility declined. The great cities of Italy, which had begun to turn their attention towards commerce, were impatient to shake off the yoke of their lords, and to establish such a government, as would make property secure, and the exercise of industry safe and easy. They purchased or extorted large immunities and grants from the emperors of Germany; and the sovereigns of other countries, particularly of France, followed their example. The great barons were eager to lay hold of this new expedient for raising money by the sales of charters of independence and enfranchisement to the towns within their domains. Thus commenced the privileges granted to corporations, and the rights acquired by communities of citizens. The benefits, which accrued to the public at large by these concessions, were of the highest importance, as they were favourable to regularity and good order, to the extension of freedom, the exertions of diligence, and a more exact and uniform administration of justice. Thus we may observe the beneficial effects of the crusades, in producing a new order of things, and erecting the first strong and durable barrier against the tyranny of the Feudal System.

III. *The Institution of Chivalry.*

Although the extravagancies of knight-errantry, and the marvellous and incredible stories related in
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the old romances of the Seven Champions of Christendom, Amadis de Gaul, King Arthur, and Sir Launcelot and the other noble Knights of the Round Table, who went forth in search of adventures into all parts of the world, have been made the entertaining subjects of burlesque description, particularly in the well-known work of Cervantes; yet we must not mistake imaginary for real chivalry. The former existed only in the old romances, and as such was the object at which many writers aimed their ridicule and satire: but we shall find, on examining the origin and progress of the latter, that it was a noble and a beneficial institution, the result of an enlightened policy, considering the times in which it was established; it increased the glory of the nations in which it flourished: enabled the nobility and gentry of Europe, by the military ardour which it inspired, to resist the arms of the Saracens and Turks; and had a very powerful effect in alleviating the evils of the feudal system, and refining the manners of the higher ranks of society. In times when robbery, oppression, barbarity, and licentiousness prevailed in most countries of Europe, it supplied in many instances, although imperfectly, the place of law; and in the hands of valour, was the instrument of humanity and justice^b.

^b This chapter is chiefly taken from *Memoires sur l'ancienne Chevalerie* par de la Carne de St. Palaye, *Academ. des Inscriptions*, tom. xx. p. 597, &c., Lord Lyttelton's *Henry II*, and Robertson's *Charles V*.

If Chivalry be considered only as a simple ceremony, by which the noble youths who were destined for war received their first arms, the custom was known among the ancient Germans, and was established in France in the reign of Charlemagne, at the commencement of the ninth century. That emperor sent to Aquitain for his son Louis, and presented him with a sword, and all the equipage of a warrior. William of Malmesbury mentions that about the same time, king Alfred presented his grandson Athelstan with a sword, and a rich belt with a crimson robe, as the ensigns of knighthood. But if we look upon chivalry as a dignity, which gave the first military rank, and which was conferred by a particular kind of investiture, attended with appropriate ceremonies, and ratified by a solemn oath, it would be difficult to trace it to a more remote period than the eleventh century.

France claims the honour of giving this institution its specific character at the time when that kingdom was recovering from the disorders, which followed the extinction of the second race of its monarchs. The royal authority began again to be respected, laws were enacted, corporations were founded, and the numerous fiefs held by the great barons under the crown, were governed with greater regularity. In this state of affairs, the sovereigns and great barons were desirous of strengthening the feudal ties by adding to the ceremony of doing homage, that of giving arms to their young vassals, previous to their first military
expe-

expeditions. It is highly probable, that by conferring the same distinction upon other persons, who did not hold any lands under them, but who offered their services from motives of esteem, or the desire of military renown, the sovereigns and great barons availed themselves of this expedient to secure the co-operation of new warriors, who were ready to follow their standard upon all occasions, when they could only rely upon their own dependants to serve them in certain districts for a limited time. They received with joy these brave volunteers, who, by increasing their forces, gave additional strength to their government; and as every knight could create other knights, the sovereign exercised his privilege without exciting jealousy. Every gentleman, who was designed for the profession of arms, was trained by a long preparatory course of discipline and service in some noble family, and was during his youth the companion of some warrior of renown. The ceremonies which attended his knighthood were solemn and impressive. They combined the rites of religion with the forms of feudal duty; and resembled the mode of admitting a profelyte into the church by baptism, as well as that of a vassal doing homage for a fief. The candidate for this distinction, accompanied by his sponsors and his priest, passed the night previous to his initiation in watching his arms, and in prayer. The next morning he repaired to the bath, the water of which was intended to serve as an emblem of the purity of his profession. He then walked to the nearest church, clothed

clothed in white garments, and presented his sword to the minister officiating at the altar, who returned it to him with his blessing. After taking the accustomed oaths to his sovereign, or feudal chief, he was invested by the attendant knights and ladies with certain parts of his armour. He was first presented with gilt spurs^c, a coat of mail, and gauntlets; and lastly he was begirt with a sword. The sovereign then, rising from the throne, conferred upon him, whilst kneeling, the honour of knight-hood, by giving him three strokes with the flat part of a drawn sword upon his shoulders or neck. He then saluted the young warrior, and pronounced these words: "In the name of God, of St. Michael, and St. George, I make thee a knight: be brave, bold, and loyal." His horse and the remaining part of his armour were afterwards presented to him, and the ceremony was concluded with a costly banquet.

Important and numerous were the privileges attached to this profession of arms, and its duties were at once arduous and indispensable. To protect the ladies was an essential part of them. Incapable of taking arms, they would frequently in such uncivilized times have seen their lands become a prey to some tyrannical neighbour, or have had

^c "Esquires were not allowed to wear any gold in their dress, although knights were from hence, as well as from wearing gilt spurs, distinguished by the name of *Equites Aurati*."

Lord Lyttelton, *Hen. II.* v. 2. p. 236.

their reputation blasted by the breath of calumny, if some knight had not come forward in their defence. To the succour of the distressed, the protection of orphans, the deliverance of captives, and the chastisement of oppressors, he likewise dedicated his sword and his life. If he failed in a scrupulous attention to these duties, he was looked upon as deserting the most solemn obligations, and was degraded with public marks of disgrace. If he performed them, he was regarded as an honour to his profession, and his renown was spread over every part of Europe.

In the character of a true knight during the golden age of chivalry, we behold an assemblage of virtues, which command our esteem and admiration, and confer honour upon human nature. His deportment was noble, and his manners condescending and gracious to all. His promise was inviolable and sacred; his love of arms was softened by the refinements of courtesy, the fair offspring of that noble society, which he enjoyed in the castles of the great. His professions of attachment and service were invariably sincere; he was as ambitious to render his name illustrious by affability, probity, and generosity, as by the number of his expeditions, trophies, and victories. By such conduct were those signalized knights, whom their contemporaries regarded as the fairest ornaments of chivalry, and whose renown has been transmitted through all succeeding ages. Such were

were Edward the black prince, the Chevalier Bayard, and Sir Philip Sidney.

Edward the Black Prince, so called from the colour of his armour, was the eldest son of king Edward the III. the great conqueror of France. At the age of seventeen, he commanded the first line of the English army, at the memorable battle of Crecy. When the fight raged with the greatest heat, the Earl of Warwick solicited the king to send succours to his son. "Tell my son, said he, that I reserve the honour of the day for him. I am confident that he will shew himself worthy of the honour of knighthood, which I so lately conferred upon him. He will be able, without my assistance, to repel the enemy." The event justified this expectation; the victory of the English was complete, and the king, on his return to the camp, flew into the arms of the prince, and exclaimed, "My brave son, persevere in your honourable course; you are my son, for valiantly have you acquitted yourself to-day; you have shown yourself worthy of empire."

At the battle of Poictiers, fought ten years after, the Black Prince commanded the small army of the English, and obtained a decisive victory over the great multitudes of the French and their allies. John, king of France, was taken prisoner; and the behaviour he experienced, showed the admirable heroism of the conqueror. Edward was 27 years
of

of age, and not yet cooled from the fury of the battle, elated by as extraordinary and as unexpected success as had ever crowned the arms of any general. He came forth to meet the captive king with expressions of regard and sympathy; administered comfort to him; paid him the tribute due to his valour, and ascribed his own victory to a superior providence, which controuls the efforts of human force and prudence. A magnificent repast was prepared in his tent for the prisoner, and he served himself the royal captive's table, as if he had been one of his retinue. He refused to take a place at the table; all his father's pretensions to the crown of France were forgotten, and John in captivity received the honours of a king, which were refused when he was seated on the throne. The French prisoners, conquered by this elevation of mind, more than by their late discomfiture, burst into tears of joy and admiration.

The prince conducted his royal prisoner to Bordeaux, concluded a two years truce with France, and soon after landed at Southwark, where he was met by a great concourse of people of all ranks. "His prisoner, John King of France, was clad in royal apparel, and mounted on a white steed, distinguished by its size and beauty, and the richness of its furniture. The conqueror rode by his side in meaner attire, and carried by a black palfrey. In this situation, more glorious than all the insolent parade of a Roman triumph, he passed through the streets of London, and presented the
King

King of France to his father, who received him with the same courtesy, as if he had been a neighbouring potentate that had voluntarily come to pay him a friendly visit. It is impossible, on reflecting on this noble conduct, not to perceive the advantages which resulted from the otherwise whimsical principles of Chivalry, and which gave, even in those rude times, some superiority even over people of a more cultivated age and nation^d."

The *Chevalier Bayard*, the valourous and faithful companion of Charles the 8th, Louis the 12th, and Francis the 1st, kings of France, in their wars, flourished at the beginning of the 16th century. After taking the city of Bresse, he received a large sum from his host, for saving his house from being plundered. Of this money he generously made a present to his two daughters who brought it. In the following winter he was quartered at Grenoble, near a young lady of good family, but of indigent circumstances; her beauty inflamed his love, and her situation gave him hopes of being able to gratify it. Her mother, urged by poverty, accepted his proposals, and compelled her reluctant daughter to visit him. As soon as she was introduced into his presence, she threw herself at his feet, and with streaming eyes besought him not to dishonour an unfortunate damsel, whom it was more consistent with a person of his virtuous character to protect. "Rise," exclaimed the Chevalier, "you shall quit

^d Hume, vol. iii. p. 460.

this place as innocent as you entered it; but more fortunate." He instantly conducted her home, reproved her mother, and gave the daughter a marriage portion of 600 pistoles. This conquest he gained over himself at the age of twenty-six, when in the situation of the great Scipio Africanus, he was most exposed to temptation, as "*juvenis, & cœlebs, & victor.*" At the battle of Marignan against the Swiss, in 1515, he fought by the side of Francis the 1st, and so impressed was that monarch with the high opinion of his prowess, that he conferred upon him the honour of knighthood. Being once asked what possessions a nobleman had best leave to his son, he replied, "such as are least exposed to the power of time or human force—*Wisdom and Virtue.*" At the retreat of the French at Rebec, he received a mortal wound, and with his last breath requested his Esquire to inform the King, "that the only regret he felt on leaving the world, was that he could serve him no longer." He then requested to be placed under a tree facing the enemy, and then expired. He was called the "Knight without fear and without reproach," and no one could have a better claim to so excellent a character.

Sir Philip Sidney, descended from John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland by the mother's side, was born at Penshurst, in Kent, 1554, and died at the early age of 32. During his education, first at Shrewsbury, and afterwards in the University of Oxford, he made an astonishing progress in all

branches of learning. His conduct was upon all occasions such as did honour to a true Knight. He could not brook the least affront, even from persons of the highest rank, as he proved by his spirited behaviour to the haughty Earl of Oxford, a nobleman very high in the favour of Queen Elizabeth. This quarrel occasioned his retirement from court, during which he wrote his Romance called *Arcadia*, which he dedicated to his sister, the countess of Pembroke. At the grand tournament held in 1581, for the entertainment of the Duke of Anjou, when he came to London to solicit the Queen in marriage, Sir Philip went through his feats of arms with great ability, and gained singular commendation. Such was his fame for relieving all who were in distress, that when the Spaniards had seized the kingdom of Portugal, Don Antonio, the chief competitor for the crown, applied to him for his assistance. He was appointed Governor of Flushing, one of the towns delivered by the Dutch to the Queen, and in several actions with the enemy, behaved with extraordinary courage, and with such mature judgment, as would have done credit to the most experienced commanders. His high renown and great deserts were so well known throughout Europe, that he was put in nomination for the crown of Poland upon the death of Stephen Batori, but the Queen refused to further his promotion. On the 22d of September, 1586, being sent out to intercept a convoy that was advancing to Zutphen, he fell into an ambuscade, and received a fatal wound in the thigh.

thigh. In his sad progress from the field of battle, passing by the rest of the army, where his uncle, Robert Earl of Leicester was, and being thirsty with excessive loss of blood, he called for drink, which was soon brought him : but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth, he saw a poor foldier carried along, who had been wounded at the same time, eagerly fixing his eyes upon it. As soon as Sir Philip perceived his inclination, he delivered the bottle to him with these words—"Thy necessity is greater than mine." This action discovered a disposition so tender, a mind so fortified against pain, a heart so overflowing with generosity to relieve distress in opposition to the most urgent call of his own necessities, that none can read a detail of it without the highest admiration. Finding himself past all hope of recovery, he prepared for death with the greatest composure, and assembled the clergymen of divers nations, before whom he made a full confession of his Christian faith. The closing scene of his life, was the parting with his brother, Sir Robert Sidney, of whom he took leave in these words,—“Love my memory, cherish my friends ; their faith to me may assure you they are sincere : but above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of the world, with all her vanities.” As he had been during his life beloved, admired, and almost idolized by all ranks of men, so was his death most deeply lamented. He was the fairest flower of Chivalry, the bright jewel of

an illustrious court, and a pattern of superior excellence, even in an age of heroes.

A knight was always known by a device on his shield, and the peculiarities of his blazonry, which were allusive to some of his martial exploits. Great honours were paid to him after his decease, particularly if he was slain in battle. His funeral was most solemn and very fully attended. His sword, helmet, spurs, gauntlets, and armorial ensigns, were suspended over the hallowed spot of his interment, or his cenotaph. His splendid tomb, graced with his effigy, and marked with a suitable inscription, was considered as a tribute of respect to his virtues, and an incentive to inflame the youthful warrior to tread the same path of valour and renown.

Chivalry was indebted to religion, for much of the ardour with which its votaries were animated. During its flourishing state, no institution could obtain credit, unless consecrated by the church, and closely interwoven with the religious opinions of the times. To the incentives of zeal, was added the spirit of gallantry. The youthful knight, previous to his going forth upon any warlike expedition, devoted himself to the service of some lady, who was usually the object of his ardent love. It was his most lively hope that her smiles and her hand would reward his valour: he bore her device upon his arms;

to

to her he consecrated his trophies; and to gain her favour, he was ready upon all occasions to meet danger, and shed his blood. This passion was the keenest incitement to his heroic actions, and fired his mind with unabating enthusiasm. Amid foreign invasion or domestic feuds, where the opposing barons and their vassals encountered each other in the hottest engagements; the faithful knight, as he couched his lance, and rushed to meet the foe, invoked the mistress of his heart, and gloried by such achievements to render himself worthy of her regard. When peace brought a short interval of repose, and rival knights contended in the jousts and tournaments, the applauding lady often adjudged the prizes to the victorious champions. In the lofty hall decked with banners and trophies of war, when the banquet was given to the jocund train of nobles, and their gallant companions in arms; the harp and the songs of the minstrel resounded the praises of the fair; and every pageant and celebrity concurred to keep the mind in the same direction to its beloved object.

The ambition of pleasing a favourite lady, and of being worthy to be considered as her champion, was a motive which stimulated a knight to the most daring actions. Many instances are recorded in the history of the middle ages, of the height to which this romantic gallantry arose. It was not unusual for a knight in the midst of a battle or a siege, to challenge his enemy to single combat, and refer to the decision of arms the

transcendent beauty of their ladies. A solemn duel of thirty knights against thirty was fought between Sir Bembrough, an Englishman, and Beaumonoir, a Breton of the party of Charles de Blois. The knights came into the field, and before the combat began, Beaumonoir called out, that it would be seen that day *who had the fairest mistresses*. After a bloody combat, the Bretons prevailed, and gained for their prize, full liberty to boast of the beauty of their ladies. It is remarkable, as it shews the spirit which chivalry inspired, that two such famous generals as Sir Robert Knolles and Sir Hugh Calverley drew their swords in this ridiculous contest^e.

We have before observed that the treatment of women in Greece and Rome was rigid and degrading. They had few attentions paid to them, and were allowed to take little share in the general intercourse of life. The northern nations, on the contrary, paid a kind of religious veneration to the female sex, considered them as endowed with superior and even divine qualities, gave them a seat in their public councils, and followed their standard to battle. They introduced into the west of Europe the respectful gallantry of the north; and this benevolence of sentiment was cherished and matured by the institution of chivalry. A female of rank, instead of having only a retired place in society, was brought forward into a con-

^e Hume, vol. ii.

spicuous point of view; she became the umpire of valour, the arbitress of victory, and at once the incentive and the reward of courageous actions. Naturally elated at beholding the power of her charms, she became worthy of the heroism which she inspired, improved in the dignity of her character, and formed her sentiments upon the pure principles of honour. The distinguished prowess of the knight was counterbalanced by the strict and spotless chastity of the lady, and these virtues long continued to countenance and to reward each other: they were encouraged by the modes, the habits, and the circumstances of the times, and found ample room for growth and expansion in the baronial states.

It hath been through all ages ever seen,
 That with the praise of arms and chivalry
 The prize of beauty still hath joined been;
 And that for reason's special privity:
 For either doth on other much rely;
 For he me seems, most fit the fair to serve,
 That can her best defend from villainy;
 And she most fit his service doth deserve
 That fairest is, and from her faith will never swerve^f.

Thus it appears, that in the institution of chivalry were blended valour, humanity, justice, honour, courtesy, and gallantry. Their combined effects were soon visible in the manners of a martial age. The horrors of war were softened, when

Spenser's Fairy Queen, quoted by Mr. Tytler.

humanity began to be esteemed the ornament of knighthood. More condescension and more affability were introduced, when courtesy was recommended as the most amiable of knightly virtues. A strict adherence to truth, with the most religious attention to every engagement, became the distinguishing characteristic of every gentleman, because chivalry was regarded as the school of honour. It is the remark of the excellent historian, to whom I confess myself under singular obligations in pursuing this and similar inquiries, "that, perhaps, the *humanity* which accompanies all the operations of war, the *refinements of gallantry*, and the *point of honour*, the three chief circumstances, which distinguish modern from ancient manners, may be attributed in a great measure to this whimsical institution §."

The classical reader cannot fail to be struck with the coincidence in the political state of ancient Greece, as described by Homer, and the condition of the feudal times. The military ardour of the heroes is similar to that of the barons. What are Bacchus, Hercules, and Jason, wandering over various parts of the world in search of adventures, and conquering giants and monsters, but knights-errant, and the exact counterparts of Sir Launcelot, Amadis de Gaul, and the Seven Champions of Christendom? Courage, Generosity,

§ Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 85.

Courtesy, and Hospitality, were the virtues common to them all.

The dispositions and sentiments which chivalry produced, were so deeply rooted, that they continued to predominate long after its spirit had evaporated, and the institution had become an object of neglect and ridicule. Generosity and a love of enterprise, the qualities to which it owed its birth, when once directed to objects that interested the affections, were not likely to be short in their duration, or partial in their effects. The refined assiduities of men naturally directed the attention of women to themselves, as well as to their admirers; and this circumstance produced a gradual improvement in female education. The men, quitting the formality of the feudal times, and the hyperbolical style of making love, of which many curious instances may be found in the old romances, became less artificial in their compliments, and softer in their manners. Women became sensible of the importance of mental improvement, and of heightening the charms of nature with elegant accomplishments, and the graces of affability and complaisance.

Thus has a great change of manners been effected, by following up a leading principle of the institution of chivalry, and giving a conspicuous place to the female sex in the ranks of society. The passion of love, purified by delicacy, has been heightened by the pleasures of sentiment and imagination;

gination ; the sphere of conversation has been enlarged and meliorated ; it has gained more propriety, more vivacity, more wit, and more variety ; social intercourse has been divested of formality, and is regulated by the laws of true politeness. It has opened new sources of satisfaction to the understanding, and afforded new delights to the heart. The merit of the sexes has been raised, they have become better entitled to the esteem of each other ; the characters both of men and women have been marked by more amiable qualities, and the stock of refined pleasures and social happiness has been very considerably increased.

VI. *The Reformation of Religion.*

There is perhaps no occurrence recorded in the annals of mankind, since the first publication of Christianity, which has had so considerable an influence in vindicating the rights of conscience, in liberating the powers of the mind from the tyranny of superstition, and in the promotion of general knowledge, as the reformation of religion in the sixteenth century. Previous to this auspicious event, all Europe bowed beneath the yoke of the Church of Rome, and trembled at the name of her sovereigns. The laws, which were issued from the Vatican by the Popes, held emperors, kings, and all their subjects, in the chains of obedience, or rather of slavery ; and to resist their authority, or to examine their reasonableness,

ableness, required a vigour of understanding, and an energy of character, of which for many ages few examples were to be found. Waldus in the twelfth century, Wickliff in the fourteenth, and John Hufs, and Jerom of Prague, his friend and disciple, in the fifteenth, had inveighed against the errors of Popery with great boldness, and exposed them with great ingenuity: but their attempts to instruct the minds of the ignorant and illiterate were premature and ineffectual. Such feeble lights, incapable of dispelling the thick darkness, which enveloped the Church, were soon extinguished: at length, however, it was the gracious act of Providence to raise up MARTIN LUTHER, as the chosen instrument of its auspicious designs^h.

This great Reformer was born of poor parents at Eisleben in Saxonyⁱ. He received a learned education, and in his youth discovered great acuteness and vigour of understanding. He first devoted himself to a monastic life in a convent of Augustinian friars, and afterward was appointed by Frederic, elector of Saxony, professor of philosophy and theology in the new university of Wittenberg. Having found a copy of the Bible, which had long been neglected, in the library of his convent, he abandoned all other pursuits, and

^h See Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. ii. p. 41. 4th ed.

ⁱ Born 1483. His opinions widely diffused in 1518. Died 1546, aged 63 years.

devoted himself to the study of the Scriptures. The pure light of revelation beamed upon his mind—he saw that Christianity was not to be learned from the writings of the schoolmen, or the decrees of general councils, but from the authority of the sacred Writings alone. An opportunity was soon afforded him of shewing his zeal for truth, and his ardour for its propagation. The Dominican monks were at that time employed by pope Leo X. to sell indulgences for all offences and crimes, for the purpose of recruiting his exhausted treasury. Luther, with great strength of argument, preached against the irregularity of their lives, and the vicious tendency of their doctrines; and he represented to the people the extreme danger of relying for salvation on any other means than those appointed by the word of God. The more he examined the claims of the Church of Rome to its empire over the reason and conscience of mankind, the more he ascertained their weakness. The discovery of one error naturally led him to the detection of others; and from refuting the extravagant tenets concerning indulgences, he proceeded to expose such as were maintained respecting pilgrimages and penances, the intercession and the worship of saints, the abuses of auricular confession, the existence of purgatory, and many other doctrines of the same kind, which have no foundation in Scripture. His arguments made a deep impression upon his hearers, and his fame was soon spread not only

only through Germany, but various other parts of Europe.

At the same time that by his sermons he was diffusing the principles of the reformation, and his writings contributed materially to the same purpose, nothing proved more fatal to the interests of the Church of Rome, or more subversive of its opinions, than his translation of the Bible into the German language. The copies of it were rapidly dispersed, and perused with the greatest avidity by persons of all ranks. They were astonished at discovering how contrary the precepts of the great Author of their religion were to the comments and the inventions of those, who had so long pretended to be the faithful interpreters of his Word. Having now in their own hands the genuine rule of faith, they thought themselves qualified to judge of the established opinions, and to pronounce whether they were conformable to the standard of Scripture, or deviated from it. The advantages which resulted from this translation of the Bible, encouraged the advocates for the reformation in other countries to follow this example: and by publishing versions in their respective languages, they materially promoted the general cause^{*}.

Luther has been accused by the catholic writers,

* Robertson's Charles V. vol. ii. p. 113, &c. History of Modern Europe, vol. ii. p. 194, &c. Gilpin's Lives of the Reformers. Burnet's History of the Reformation.

of excessive love of wine, and of the amusements of the field; and he shook their prejudices by marrying a nun. His followers, however, inform us that he was a man of the strictest temperance, that he drank nothing but water, and that he would occasionally fast two or three days together, and then eat a herring and some bread¹.

He had the satisfaction to receive the most important assistance from men of abilities and learning. Melancthon, famed for his genius, learning, moderation, and piety, was the author of the confession of Augsbourg, presented by the protestants to the emperor Charles V. at the diet held in that place. Bucer introduced the doctrines of Luther into the imperial cities upon the Rhine; and Olaus disseminated them with equal zeal in Sweden, his native country. Zuinglius and Calvin, men not inferior to the great Reformer himself in zeal and intrepidity, were active in Switzerland. However they disagreed in their doctrines, they co-operated with the most perfect harmony in their opposition to the errors of the see of Rome. The objections made by the Pope to the divorce of Henry VIII. from his queen Catherine, hastened the introduction of the reformed opinions into England. The acute and learned Erasmus was far from being an inconsiderable coadjutor to Luther. His numerous works prepared the way

¹ Seward's Anecdotes, v. i. p. 82, &c. See other anecdotes of him by the pleasing collector, vol. 3. p. 112.

for the reception of the new doctrines. He confuted many of the Romish errors with great weight of argument and force of eloquence. In his satirical writings, likewise, he held up to derision the frauds practised by the monks to impose upon the credulity of the people; and there was scarcely any error, which Luther endeavoured to reform, which had not been treated by Erasmus, either with censure or raillery. Still he was candid enough to confess that he must leave to the great Reformer the glory of dying if necessary, as a martyr to his opinions, as he acknowledged that in case of persecution, he had not courage enough to brave its terrors, but should be likely to follow the example of St. Peter^m.

The character of Luther was such as best qualified him for a reformer, at the particular period when he stood forth as the champion of the Protestant faith. His abilities were of the first order, strong by nature, and improved by study. His sanctity of life was conformable to the pure doctrines which he taught. His diligence in detecting the errors of his opponents, and in propagating his own opinions, was active and indefatigable. He had an ardour of temper, which sometimes broke out into vehemence and impetuosity;—the effect of his courage and zeal in the cause of truth.

^m Erasmi Epist. 583. See an excellent account of this accomplished scholar and refined satirist, in Warton on the Genius of Pope, vol. i. p. 187.

Erasmus said of Luther that God had bestowed upon mankind so violent a physician, in consequence of the magnitude of their diseases. From every instance of opposition his undaunted spirit derived fresh energy: he readily obeyed the summons of the sovereign Pontiff, and stood unmoved before his legate, prepared as he was, not to retract, but to justify his opinions. He afterwards in the presence of numerous spectators burnt the bull of excommunication, which had been issued against him. Conscious of the rectitude of his motives, he was bold to assert and prompt to execute his designs. In his controversies he was regardless of the rank or quality of his opponents, and treated Henry VIII. one of the greatest potentates in Europe, with the same opprobrious language, which he used to Tetzels, or Eccius, the ignoble advocates for the see of Rome. Had he been less harsh and severe in his censures, and less vehement in his invectives, he would not have suited the rude manners of the times. Had he addressed his countrymen in a voice of less authority and boldness, he would not have awakened them from the lethargy of superstition, in which they were entranced: and if he had been less confident in his own talents, and the goodness of his cause, he would not have spread his opinions with such rapidity, and carried them to such an extent. Unaided by power, and unassisted by force of arms, he shook the throne of the Popes, and subverted a great part of the vast fabric of their ecclesiastical dominion. This difficult task he accomplished by
turning

turning the current of public opinion against it. He imparted to mankind the light of reason and revelation, and enabled them to discern the errors, the frauds, and the usurpations of the see of Rome; and he taught them to vindicate the rights of conscience, and the Gospel. He had the satisfaction of living to see whole provinces and kingdoms adopt his opinions with the highest respect, and subscribe to his decisions with the most implicit deference. He was listened to with that attention, which truth, when accompanied by novelty, is always sure to command. And by an instance of divine goodness, particularly signal, if we consider the ferocious manners, and intolerant spirit of his enemies, he had the happiness to end his life with composure and peace, in his native city, in the midst of his own family. For the invaluable favours conferred by the great Reformer upon his own age, and upon all posterity, he stands high among the benefactors of the human race, and is entitled to praise, gratitude, and veneration.

The opposition, which was raised against the reformers, produced the effect, which it was the design of their enemies to prevent. Severe edicts, and bloody persecutions, brought over many converts to a more mild and tolerant system, aided as it was by the boldness and warmth of Luther and Calvin, and the wit and learning of Erasmus and Melancthon. In vain did Henry VIII. of England display his polemical skill, and obtain the title of *Defender of the Faith* from Pope Leo X, as a reward for his attack on Luther. In vain were

repeated diets assembled for the condemnation of his opinions. In vain did the crafty Charles V. emperor of Germany enter into an alliance with pope Paul III. for the express purpose of extirpating what they stigmatized with the name of heresy. It was to no purpose that the Protestants were forbidden under the most heavy penalties to teach any doctrine contrary to the decrees of the council of Trent. And with as little effect did Queen Mary, in a spirit of bigotry, cruel and infuriate, commit the holy martyrs of England to the flames. Even the massacre of St. Bartholomew, perpetrated by the sanguinary Charles IX. of France, produced no permanent injury to the Protestant cause. The same consequences ensued, which had originally taken place at the first publication of Christianity. The rage of persecution tended only to stimulate the curiosity and excite the compassion of mankind; and their inquiries led to the increase of converts, wherever the blood of the martyrs was shed.

Many causes led to the success of the reformed opinions. The schisms in the Church of Rome, the profligate characters of the Popes, and the dissolute lives and intolerance of the Clergy, had made the people disgusted with an establishment, which under the mask of religion encouraged immorality, by granting indulgences even for crimes. The recent invention of printing gave a rapid circulation to the writings of the reformers, and particularly to the various translations of the Bible.

And the revival of learning conduced to open the minds of men to free inquiry, and critical researches. Thus did the peculiar circumstances of the times, and the favourable conjuncture of various events, unite to crown the labours of Luther with success. Nor must we ever lose sight of *that great cause*, into which all the rest may be resolved, the supreme direction of divine Providence, which at this auspicious period shed the radiant beams of its goodness upon a long-benighted world.

The Reformation not only narrowed the dominions of the sovereign Pontiffs, but obliged them to adopt a different mode of conduct, and to rule by new maxims of policy. Their behaviour was bent to the urgency of the times: from having for a long time been haughty and tyrannical, they became condescending and gracious. Ever since the Reformation, they have continued to govern rather by address and management, than by despotic authority; and such has been the decline of their power, that from wielding the sceptre of Europe, and being the arbiters of all its affairs, they have nearly been reduced to a level with the petty princes of Italy and Germany.

One great advantage consequent upon the Reformation has been the improvement not only of its advocates, but even of its enemies, in learning, science, and arts. It was found expedient thus to combat the reformers with their own weapons, and to efface the aspersions, which they threw upon the

ignorance of the Papists. Hence the attention of the Romish Clergy has been directed to the cultivation of useful and elegant learning, to a degree unknown in former ages.

Such have been the beneficial consequences of an event, which, in a political as well as in a religious point of view, is a distinguished object of regard and admiration. The Reformation has vindicated the rights of reason and conscience; it has taught the duty, and diffused the blessings of Toleration; and while it has held forth the Scriptures themselves, as the proper and exclusive standard of religious opinions, it has disseminated the genuine principles of Christianity, purified the faith, improved the manners, and increased the virtues of mankind.

V. *The Revival of Classical Learning*ⁿ.

Alfred the Great of England, and Charlemagne Emperor of Germany, flourished in the ninth century. These earliest luminaries of the modern world, shed a strong and vivid lustre over the age in which they lived. They encouraged learning

ⁿ The works from which I have derived assistance in compiling this article, are Enfield's Abridgment of Brucker's History of Philosophy, Dr. Warton's Observations on Pope, F. Warton's History of English Poetry, and Roscoe's Life of Leo X.

both by their example and patronage; but their endeavours were not sufficiently effectual to overcome the gross ignorance of their times^p. The schools, which they erected, were confined to churches and monasteries; and the contracted notions of the monks, who presided over them, partly arising from their recluse modes of life, and partly from their religious prejudices, rendered them wholly inadequate to the task of diffusing useful knowledge. The reign of barbarism and ignorance continued, with little intermission, till the learning, which the Saracens had introduced into Spain, began to spread through the rest of Europe. This learning consisted in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, chemistry, and medicine, and the philosophy of Aristotle. Several enlightened scholars, who had studied under the Arabians, undertook, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the education of youth, particularly in the cities of Italy, and afterwards in those of England, France, and Germany. To the prevalence and permanency of these branches of knowledge, the establishment of the universities

^p “ Charlemagne remplissoit le monde de son nom; c’etoit l’homme de la plus grande taille, & le plus fort de son tems. On le voyoit passer rapidement des Pyrenées en Allemagne, & d’Allemagne en Italie. Tout cela ressemble assez aux heros de la fable; mais ce qui ne leur ressemble pas, c’est qu’il pensoit que la force ne sert qu’a vaincre, & qu’il faut des loix pour gouverner. Il aima, cultiva, & protegea les lettres & les arts, car la veritable grandeur ne va jamais sans cela.”

Nouvel Abregé de Henault, Tom. i. p. 3.

of Europe, so general in the thirteenth century, was eminently conducive. Some indeed were founded rather earlier; and Paris and Oxford carry their pretensions to antiquity so high as the reigns of Alfred and Charlemagne: but the real claims of Paris are dated from the time of Philip Augustus, who flourished in the twelfth century. And it would be too heavy a task, even inclined as I may be to support the high antiquity of the University of Oxford, if I were required to trace any literary institution for the *regular* maintenance of students upon a *collegiate* plan, to a remoter period than the reign of Edward the first. Merton college was then founded by Walter de Merton, Lord Chancellor of England, and bishop of Rochester, in the year 1264^a. Upon a careful examination of the pretensions of the first great seminaries of education, the honoured title of Mother of the universities of Europe seems to be due to Bologna. It was within her walls, during the tumults and disorders of the eleventh century, that learning first attempted to raise her head. In the succeeding age, the considerable number of 10,000 students are said to have assembled there, and each country in Europe had its resident regents and professors. The studies of the civil and canon law

^a “ Merton College ought to be the first, and the first now I have put it, because it is the most ancient endowed house in Oxford, (some say in all the learned world) and the most famous for the education of learned men.”

Wood's History and Antiquities of Oxford, p. 2.

constituted the favourite and almost the exclusive objects of application. Paris directed the attention of her scholars to theology, and nearly with an equal degree of reputation. Oxford began at this time to acquire celebrity, and to rival, or rather to surpass the foreign universities in the ability of its professors, and the concourse of its members; for in the year 1340 they amounted, according to the account of the historian Speed, to not less than 30,000. Many other universities were not long after founded, particularly in Italy and France, and were all modelled upon the same plan as Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, with respect to their institutions, and studies.

In these seminaries of learning, logic and scholastic divinity were for ages the reigning subjects of pursuit. Incorrect translations of the works of Aristotle, from Arabic into Latin, and after the commencement of the 12th Century, translations from the original Greek, together with Porphyry's Introduction to the Categories, were perused with the greatest avidity; and the disquisitions of the commentators upon the Organon of Aristotle, were so favourably received, that their authors almost totally eclipsed the fame of their great master himself. Education consisted chiefly in learning to debate upon subjects of metaphysics and theology, and the mode of reasoning by syllogism was applied to every topic, as the best instrument in the hands of an able disputant to frame the most specious arguments, and to perplex the

plainest truths. To make subtle distinctions between one word and another, to separate subjects by infinite divisions, not as the real nature of things, but as fancy suggested, and to endeavour to solve abstruse questions, which had no moral end whatever, were the incessant occupations of the Schoolmen, and their disciples. They have been very aptly compared to those Indians, who, by the curious arrangement of a few feathers, which form their only stock, compose a thousand varieties of figure, and a perpetual change of picture. While an attachment to the ceremonial and ritual observances of the Church of Rome, and implicit obedience to its edicts, and the decrees of its councils, usurped the place of pure and practical Christianity; the bulky volumes of these schoolmen filled every library, and exercised the understanding of every student. And their speculations, however devoid of taste or moral improvement, as they were patronized by the dignitaries of the Church, and led to all ecclesiastical preferments, engrossed for centuries the whole attention of universities, interested courts, and were celebrated in every part of Europe.

These Schoolmen are commonly divided into three periods; the first is dated from Peter Abelard, A. D. 1100, who was eminent for all the theological and philosophical learning of his age, to the middle of the 13th century; the second, from that time when Albertus Magnus, Bishop of Ratisbon, flourished, who renounced his dignity for the sake of pursuing his studies;

studies; and the third from the year 1330 to the Reformation.

After the philosophy of Aristotle and the commentaries of the schoolmen had for so long a period contributed to give a wrong direction to the mind, and had engrossed the attention of students; a series of events occurred in the fifteenth century, which turned the attention of men to new researches, opened the way to the revival of classical learning, and the improvement of all the arts and sciences connected with its cultivation.

The progress of the Turkish arms, although fatal to the Greek empire, very materially conduced to the advancement of Greek learning in the west. Emanuel Chrysoloras led the way to those Greeks who sought an asylum in Italy, where Dante and Petrarch had already planted the seeds of classical learning. He was sent in 1387 by the Emperor, John Palæologus, to solicit the aid of the Christian princes against the Turks, and visited Florence, Rome, and other famous cities of Italy, where he diffused the literature of his country. John Argyropylus, Theodore Gaza, and several other Greek refugees were induced by the liberality of Cosmo de Medici, a great patron of learning, to settle at Florence. They had the glory of reviving a taste for those studies, which had for seven hundred years laid dormant in the west. Other learned men had long trembled at the approach, and at length fled from the fierce aspect of Mahomet

met the Second, on his taking Constantinople in 1453. They followed their countrymen into Italy, where they conveyed and interpreted many inestimable works of their antient writers. They were cordially received by the best Italian scholars, and the great dignitaries of the Church, who quickly imbibed a fondness for the graces of genuine poetry, eloquence, and history: a more useful system of study was soon adopted, and the subtleties of logic, and the speculations of metaphysics, were gradually superseded by the principles of genuine philosophy, sound criticism, and elegant learning.

The patronage of the Popes gave splendour and importance to the revival of classical erudition. Considering its encouragement as an excellent expedient to establish their authority, such was their bounty to scholars, that the court of Rome on a sudden changed its austere character, and became the seat of elegance and urbanity. Nicholas the Fifth about the year 1440 offered public rewards for compositions in the learned languages, appointed professors in the Belles Lettres, and employed intelligent persons to traverse all parts of Europe in search of the classical manuscripts, which were concealed in the libraries of monasteries.

Leo the Xth was conspicuous for his ardour and munificence in patronising this new kind of learning. He attracted the most eminent scholars in Europe by his liberality to become professors in
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the Gymnasium, or academy in Rome; and those who read lectures there in theology in the civil and canon law, medicine, moral philosophy, logic, rhetoric, the mathematics, and botany, amounted to not less than a hundred; and even in the first year of Leo's pontificate, such numbers of students repaired to Rome, that it promised to be held in higher estimation than any other university in Italy.

But this attention of Leo the Xth was more particularly directed to the encouragement of the Greek language. He patronised John Lascaris, a noble and learned Greek, who had been driven from his country by the progress of the Turkish arms: with his concurrence, and that of Marcus Musurus, his pupil, and the first editor of the works of Plato, he invited ten young Greeks of good education and virtuous character into Italy, and for their accommodation established an academy upon the Esquilian hill in Rome, for the instruction of the Italians in Grecian literature, and gave the direction of the institution to John Lascaris, with a liberal pension. Leo likewise established a press at Rome for editing the Greek classics, and committed the superintendence of it to Lascaris. He offered ample rewards to those who would procure for him manuscripts of the works of any of the ancient Greek or Roman authors, and promised to publish them with accuracy at his own expense. The immediate and happy result of this search was the recovery of the

the five first books of the annals of Tacitus, which were brought from the Abbey of Corvey, in Westphalia, by Arcomboldo, who was liberally rewarded. The printing was entrusted to the care of Philippus Beroaldus, who was directed to publish it in an elegant and useful form. He likewise gave great encouragement to the study of oriental literature; in his time classical learning, and particularly Latin poetry, were cultivated with great assiduity: among the most distinguished Latin poets was Vida, whose elegant style and correct taste reflected the image of Virgil. He is best known by his *Poetics*, but there is perhaps no poem which does more credit to his feelings, than his verses to the memory of his parents.

Leo was the patron of the great Raphael; he appointed him Prefect of the Church of St. Peter, and distinguished his merit as an architect, as well as a painter. Among other great works, he was employed by him to paint the Cartoons, and many other grand compositions for the Vatican, and to delineate the antient buildings of Rome. He had made some progress in this undertaking, when he died at the age of 37, and the Pontiff was so affected, that he wept bitterly on hearing the melancholy news. This encouragement of learning and the arts redounds to the immortal honour of Leo the tenth; more particularly if it be considered, that his patronage was extended at a time when he was harassed by various occupations both foreign and

and domestic; and that amidst two hundred and fifty Popes, many of whom had as ample means, he is the most distinguished, and not only among them, but among all the sovereigns of Europe.

The most illustrious period of the modern arts commences with the return of Michael Angelo from Rome to Florence about the year 1500, and terminates with the death of Leo the tenth in 1521. The influence of his patronage is described by the most correct of our English poets, with his accustomed beautiful imagery:

“ But see each Muse in Leo’s golden days,
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither’d bays;
Rome’s antient Genius, o’er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head.
Then Sculpture, and her sister arts revive,
Stones leap’d to form, and rocks began to live;
With sweeter notes each rising temple rung,
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.
Immortal Vida! round whose honour’d brow
The poet’s bays, and critic’s ivy grow;
Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame.”

These improvements were soon received in other countries, and spread their influence over England, France, Spain, and Hungary. The Greek tongue was introduced into England by William Grocyn: he was a fellow of New College, Oxford, and died about the year 1520. To Germany must be

† Pope’s Essay on Criticism.

allowed

allowed a very large and distinguished share in the restoration of letters. And the mechanical genius of Holland, at an auspicious moment, added to all the fortunate events in favour of science, an admirable invention; for to that country the world was indebted for the discovery of the art of PRINTING. The honour of having given rise to this art has been claimed by the cities of Haarlem, Mentz, and Strasburgh. To each of these it may be attributed in a qualified sense, as within a short space of time they respectively contributed to its advancement. But the original inventor was Laurentius John Coster of Haarlem, who made his first essay with wooden types about the year 1430. The art was communicated by his servant to John Fust and John Guttemburgh of Mentz. It was carried to perfection by Peter Schoiffer, the son-in-law of Fust, who invented the mode of casting metal types, and was probably the first who used them in printing*. The most popular of these very ingenious mechanics

* Trithemius, in his Chronicle, written A. D. 1514, says he had it from the mouth of Peter Schoiffer, that the first book they printed with moveable types was the Bible, about the year 1450, in which the expences were so enormous as to have cost 4000 florins before they had printed 12 sheets. The author of a MS. Chronicle of Cologne, compiled in 1499, also says, that he was told by Ulric Zell of Cologne, (who himself introduced printing there in 1466) that the Latin Bible was first begun to be printed in the year of the Jubilee 1450, in a large character. *Scriptura grandiori quali hodie missalia solent imprimi.* Mr. Edwards of Pall Mall possessed

mechanics was Fust, who is reported to have carried a number of his Bibles to Paris; and when he offered them to sale as manuscripts, the French, considering the number of the books, and their exact resemblance to each other, without the variation even of a letter or a stop, and that the best transcribers could not possibly be so exact in their most accurate copies, concluded he must have derived assistance from some supernatural agent. Either by actually prosecuting him as a magician, or threatening to do so, they extorted from him the secret of his new and most ingenious invention; and it is probable, that from this circumstance arose the marvellous stories commonly related of Dr. Faustus.

The art of printing was soon spread throughout a great part of Europe. It passed to Rome in 1466, and the Roman type was in a short time brought to great perfection. In the reign of Henry VI. Thomas Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, sent William Caxton, a person remarkable in that age for cultivating learning amid the occupations of commerce, to Haarlem, to gain a knowledge of this invention; and "the first book which Caxton printed was an English translation of the *Recuyell of the Historys of Troye*, in 1471, in Flanders. The first book known to have been printed in England by him was a translation from the French of *the Game* possessed a copy of this curious Bible, 3 vol. bound in Morocco. In his catalogue it was valued at 126l. There is a beautiful copy of this work, 4 vol. fol. in the Bodleian library.

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and *Play of the Chess*, 1474, with fusile metal types, such as are used at present. The art of printing advanced rapidly to a high state of improvement. Of its sudden excellence sufficient specimens are extant; for many of the books printed during the earliest period may challenge a comparison, with respect to the arrangement of the matter, elegance of the type, blackness of the letter, colour of the paper, and size of the margin, with the copies of works best executed in the present times. This elegant and systematic form was given to typography by Jenfon, Spira, Zarotus, the Stephani, Turnebus, Plantin and others. Among these early printers, no one is to be found more conspicuous than *Aldus Manutius senior*, who was born at Bassiano, a village in the Roman territory, 1447. His eminence as a classical scholar, and a teacher of the Greek language, introduced him to the society of all the learned men of his country. Instigated by the most honourable motives, and zealous for the diffusion of polite learning, he instituted a society for the purpose of correcting the works of antient authors, and publishing them in an accurate manner. Venice was the scene of his indefatigable industry, and the earliest production of his press was the *Poem of Hero and Leander*, by *Musæus*, published in 1494. During twenty years from that time, exclusive of many Italian and other works, there was scarcely a classic which he did not publish and republish in different sizes*. He effected more for the promotion of learning than any of the crowned or mitred

* See Dibdin's *Classics*, p. 513.

heads of his age; and he had the satisfaction to find, that the encouragement given to his elegant editions was correspondent to his wishes. As he was desirous of pursuing his occupations without interruption, except by those who came to consult or assist him, he placed an inscription over the door of his study, which shewed the laudable anxiety of a man of business to exclude those idle and impertinent intruders, who wish to sanction the loss of their own time by engrossing that of their friends^t.

At the close of the sixteenth century, various editions of books in the Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, and Coptic languages, were published. This admirable discovery of the art of printing was made at a period the most favourable to its reception and improvement. Not only a taste for polite learning began, as we have before remarked, to be fashionable in the fifteenth century, but many persons of the first rank in several parts of Europe, and particularly in Italy, distinguished themselves by their love of letters, and their patronage of eminent scholars. Many public libraries were about this time erected in the great cities of Europe, and were furnished with manuscripts of antient authors, purchased at a great expence; but from the care

^t Quisquis es rogat te Aldus etiam atque etiam, ut si quid est quod a se velis, perpaucis agas, deinde actutum abeas; nisi tanquam Hercules defesso Atlante, veneris suppositurus humeros; semper enim erit quod et tu agas, et quotquot huc attulerint pedes. Roscoe's Leo the Xth, vol. i. p. 114.

with which they were guarded, their perusal was confined to a small number of readers. No invention therefore could be more fortunate, or more likely to gratify the general curiosity, than that by which copies of the same work were easily and expeditiously multiplied, sold at a reasonable rate, and circulated throughout every part of the civilized world.

Thus, as books were multiplied, a taste for reading became more general. And it is very remarkable, that the reformation of religion, and the revival of classical learning, were reciprocally advantageous; they reflected mutual light, and afforded mutual assistance. The ecclesiastics, when books were placed within the common reach, could no longer confine the classics to themselves; and men were eager to acquire that knowledge, which had been so long concealed. They imagined the mines of antiquity to be very rich; and they were not disappointed; for as soon as they began to be explored, they were found to answer the most sanguine expectations.

As the dawn of the Reformation in England was obscured by the bigotry of the sanguinary Mary, so were there few circumstances in her reign, propitious to the growth of polite erudition. It is however a pleasing circumstance to be able to select an event from the calamitous history of her times, which happily concurred with some preceding establishments to diffuse classical knowledge,

ledge, and which does honour to the founder of a *Society*, which among the statesmen, poets, and scholars, enrolled in its lists, records the names of SOMERS, CHATHAM, MERRICK, WARTON, BENWELL, and BOWLES. In the year 1554, Trinity College in Oxford was founded by Sir Thomas Pope^u: who in the constitution of this Society principally inculcates the use and necessity of classical literature; and recommends it as the most important and leading object in his system of academical study. “He establishes in this seminary a teacher of humanity, whose business is described with a particularity not usual in the constitutions given to collegiate bodies of this kind; and he is directed to exert his utmost diligence in tincturing his auditors with a just relish for the graces and purity of the Latin language, and to explain critically the Offices, de Oratore, and Rhetorical Treaties of Cicero, the Institutes of Quintilian, Aulus Gellius, Plautus, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Livy, &c. In his prefatory statute, where he describes the nature and design of this foundation, he declares, that he destines the younger part of his establishment not only to dialectics and philosophy, but to the more polite literature. The statutes of this college were submitted to the inspection of Cardinal Pole, one of the chief promoters of the revival of

^u Alme Parens salveto! tuum est vestigia vulgi

Quod fugiam: tu das inopis crudelia vitæ

Tædia solari, afflictis spes unica rebus!

Et finis Aonidum viridantes ire per hortos.

T. Warton in Sacellum Coll. Trin. Oxon.

polite letters in England, as appears from a curious passage in a letter written by the founder now remaining, which not only displays the Cardinal's ideas of the new erudition, but shews the state of the Greek language at this period."—"Queen Mary was herself eminently learned: at the desire of Queen Catherine Parr, she translated in her youth Erasmus's Paraphrase on St. John; the preface is written by Udall, master of Eton school: in which he much extols her distinguished proficiency in literature. It would have been fortunate, if Mary's attention to this work had softened her temper, and enlightened her understanding. She frequently spoke in public with propriety, and always with prudence and dignity*."

In the subsequent reign of Elizabeth, an accurate acquaintance with the phrases, and all the peculiarities of the ancient poets, historians, and orators, was made an indispensable and almost the principal object in the education, not only of a gentleman, but even of a lady. Among the females of high rank, who gained the reputation of classical scholars, the Queen herself, and the beautiful and unfortunate Lady Jane Gray, were the most conspicuous. Roger Ascham, their learned preceptor, speaks in raptures of the progress, which they both made in the Greek and Latin authors^y. He says, that he had read all Cicero, and a great part of

* Warton's English Poetry, vol. iii.

^y Ascham. Epist. ii. lib. p. 18. Edit. 1581, &c. Warton's Life of Sir T. Pope, p. 93, &c.

Livy, with the Princess Elizabeth. She began the day with reading a portion of the Greek Testament, and then studied some select orations of Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles. She often conversed with him in Greek with tolerable facility; and spoke Latin readily, justly, and even critically. Before he went abroad, he paid a visit to Lady Jane Gray, whom he found in her chamber, reading the *Phædo* of Plato in Greek, and “that, said he, with as much delight, as some gentlemen would read a merry tale in Boccace;” while the Duke and Duchess and the rest of the family were hunting in the park. This fondness for the classics was sometimes displayed in a ludicrous and extravagant manner. It appeared in the shows and pageants exhibited during the progress of the Queen through different parts of her dominions, and in the entertainments held in her honour, wherein emblems allusive to classical mythology were constantly introduced.

But the pedantry, which gave so deep a tinge to the eminent characters of that age had little effect upon the mind of Shakespeare. Raised by the power of original genius, he did not suffer himself to be misled by the fashion of the court, but made whatever information he could collect through the medium of translations subservient to his own purposes. His works, like those of Milton, were for a time neglected: but since the close of the seventeenth century, they have been held in the highest estimation, and have contributed, perhaps

more than any others of our national compositions, to diffuse a relish for books. That relish was first excited by the numerous translations of the Greek and Roman authors, and of Italian tales into English, in the reign of Elizabeth. The works of the writers, who flourished in the time of Queen Anne, particularly Addison, Swift, and Dryden, divested learning of its stiffness, revived a just taste for the classics, and had great influence in making the perusal of books a popular amusement. Since that period, we may fairly be called a nation of readers. Books of all kinds have been produced, and the *Press* has supplied the means of multiplying them to a degree, which exceeds the power of calculation. We well know, and lament, that it is subject to great abuse, and is too frequently made an instrument for the propagation of insignificant, licentious, and pernicious works, destructive to morals, and hostile to religion. It did perhaps more mischief by the diffusion of the principles of anarchy and atheism at the close of the last century, particularly upon the Continent, than the sword or the cannon: but, happily for mankind, the antidote grows in the same soil, where the poison springs up in such luxuriance. Let us consider what the press has effected, and what it may still produce for the advantage, the instruction, and delight of mankind. Its benefits are as extensive as they are various; it is of the highest importance to us, as we are Englishmen, and as we are Christians. It is the safeguard of liberty, when used to protect our excellent Constitution against
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the incroachments of power, the cabals of party, and the attacks of democratic rage. It is the ally of religion, when it supplies the world with the works of those who labour to disseminate the precepts of genuine Christianity. It furnishes the means of rational improvement, and amusement in the hours of sickness and leisure, communicates instruction to the young, and entertainment to the old, and spreads these enjoyments far and wide, before every civilized people of the globe. We have therefore sufficient reason to congratulate ourselves, on being born at a time, in which we are rescued from the gross ignorance which enveloped our ancestors; when the light of pure religion and useful knowledge is diffused around us; and when, provided our moral improvements keep pace, in a due degree, with our intellectual proficiency, we may be virtuous, as well as enlightened and intelligent, beyond the example of former ages.

VI. *The Progress of Navigation.*

Although we find considerable proofs of a regular commerce in the ancient world, yet navigation appears to have been little improved. The structure of the vessels used by the ancients was rude, and their method of working them defective: they had no other method of regulating their course than by the sun and the stars; they only cruised along the coast, and dared hardly venture to steer out of

sight of land. Considering, however, all circumstances, great advances in navigation were made by the Phenicians, who passed the streights of Gibraltar, and visited the western coasts of Spain and Africa. The Carthaginians excelled their parent state, explored the coasts of Gaul and Britain, and sailed along the western coast of Africa; planted colonies there, and discovered the Fortunate islands, now known by the name of the Canaries. Their spirit of adventure was checked by a deeply rooted prejudice with respect to the nature of the torrid zone, which they thought uninhabitable on account of its intense heat.

The period at length arrived when Providence permitted man to pass the limits by which he had been so long confined, and allowed him to open a most extensive sphere to his exertions. The Portuguese led the way in the new discoveries: Henry, the fourth son of John, king of Portugal, an amiable and accomplished prince, and particularly fond of the study of geography, equipped a vessel², and the fortunate adventurers, driven from their course by a storm, discovered the island of Porto Santo. In the following year the island of Madeira was discovered, where they established a colony, and planted the vine of Cyprus and the sugar cane. Emboldened by such success, the Portuguese advanced within the tropics, and in a few years discovered the river Senegal, Cape de Verd, and the

² A. D. 1418.

islands which lie off that promontory. About fifty years after, Bartholomew Diaz, an officer of great sagacity and fortitude, stretched boldly towards the south on the coast of Africa, and discovered nearly a thousand miles of new country. No dangers, no violence of storms in unknown seas, neither the mutinies of his crew, nor the calamities of famine, which he suffered from the loss of his store ship, could deter him from prosecuting his enterprise; and as a reward for his determined perseverance, he at last descried the lofty promontory which bounds Africa to the south. The shattered condition of his ships, and the seditious spirit of his sailors, enabled him only to see, and not to explore it. He gave it the name of Cabo Tormentoso, or the stormy cape, but the king, his master, entertaining no doubt of having found the long desired course to India, gave it the more auspicious name of the Cape of Good Hope.

The course of history brings us to an acquaintance with a discoverer, whose profound judgment and undaunted spirit of perseverance, rank him among the first characters in history.

Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, was allured into the service of the Portuguese by the fame of their discoveries. His early studies consisted in geography, astronomy, and the art of drawing; to these he applied with the greatest ardour, on account of their connexion with navigation, for which he had the strongest predilection. He

He went to sea at the age of fourteen; and by voyages to almost every part of the globe then known, he became one of the most skilful navigators in Europe. The successful progress of the Portuguese roused his emulation; he revolved the principles upon which they had founded their discoveries, and the mode in which they had carried them on. His great mind led him to form an idea of improving upon their plan, and of accomplishing what had been hitherto attempted in vain.

To find out a passage by sea to the East Indies, was the great object of enterprise at that period. Reflections upon the danger and tediousness of the course which the Portuguese had been pursuing, led Columbus to consider whether a more direct and shorter passage might not be found out. After revolving every circumstance suggested by his knowledge of the theory and practice of navigation, and considering that as the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, formed but a small part of the terraqueous globe, and that it was highly improbable that the part hitherto unexplored should consist only of an immense ocean, he at last concluded, that by sailing directly towards the west, across the Atlantic, new countries, which probably formed a part of the vast continent of India, might be found out. He proposed his project to the Genoese, and to the court of Portugal, without success. He next laid it before Ferdinand and Isabella, sovereigns of Spain; and after repeated instances of neglect and delay, the bold spirit of Isabella sympathised

sympathised with that of Columbus, and he was enabled to proceed on his voyage. He sailed from the port of Palos, in Andalusia, on the 3d of August, 1492. His squadron, if such it could be called, consisted of the Santa Maria, commanded by Columbus himself, the Pinta, of which Martin Pinzon was captain, and the Nigna, under the command of Vincent Yanez Pinzon.

With these vessels, hardly superior in burthen or force to large boats, victualled for twelve months, and their whole crews, consisting only of 90 men, Columbus passed the Canary Islands. His men were at first dismayed at extending their course beyond former navigators, and afterwards grew mutinous; but he possessed a complete knowledge of mankind, a patient perseverance in the execution of his own plans, a command of his own passions, and the talent of acquiring the ascendant over those of other men. He endeavoured to conceal the real progress which they made, and reckoned short during the whole voyage. When he had advanced 200 leagues to the west of the Canaries, a greater distance from land than any Spaniard had ever been before, he was struck with an appearance no less astonishing than new. He observed that the magnetic needle in the compass did not point exactly to the polar star, but varied a degree toward the west, and as they proceeded the variations increased. This appearance, now familiar, but the cause of which has never been explained, filled the companions of Columbus with

with terror. But his intrepid and ingenious mind invented a plausible reason for this appearance, which quieted their fears. When they had proceeded 770 leagues, according to the Admiral's reckoning, to the west of the Canaries, their prospect of success seemed to be as distant as ever. They were now advanced into an unknown and an untried ocean, where never sail had been set, nor ever keel of a ship had ploughed the sea before. They had seen no object but the sea and the sky for thirty days, and their fears revived with additional force; and impatience, disappointment, and despair, were painted on every countenance, except on that of the patient and intrepid Admiral. The sailors began to murmur, and then to mutiny; they agreed that Columbus should be compelled to return back, a measure which their common safety, considering the crazy state of their vessels, required. And some of the more audacious proposed that, in order to silence the remonstrances of their commander, he should be thrown into the sea. Driven to an extremity by their mutinous disposition, he made a solemn promise to his men, that if, in the course of three days, land was not discovered, he would comply with their request, and return to Spain.

This proposal was not deemed unreasonable, nor did Columbus hazard much by confining himself to a period so short. The presages of discovering land were now so numerous and promising, that he regarded them as infallible. For some days the
founding

sounding line had reached the bottom, the flocks of birds increased, and were composed not only of sea fowl, but of such land birds as could not be supposed to fly far from the shore. The crew of the Pinta observed a cane floating, which seemed to have been newly cut, and a piece of timber curiously carved. The sailors on board the Nigna took up the branch of a tree, with red berries, perfectly fresh. The clouds around the setting sun assumed a new appearance; the air was more mild, and in the night the wind became unequal and variable. From all these symptoms, Columbus was so confident of being near land, that on the evening of the 11th of October, after public prayers for success, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the ship to bring to, keeping strict watch, lest they should be driven on shore in the night. During this interval of expectation, no man shut his eyes; all kept upon deck, gazing intently towards that quarter where they expected to discover land.

About two hours before midnight, Columbus, standing on the forecastle, observed a light at a distance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Gutierrez, a page of the queen's wardrobe. He perceived it, and calling to Salcedo, comptroller of the fleet, all three saw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place. A little after midnight, the joyful sound of *land! land!* was heard from the Pinta, which kept always a-head of the other ships. As soon as the morning dawned,

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ed, all their doubts and fears were dispelled; they beheld an island about two leagues to the north, whose flat and verdant fields, well stored with wood and watered with many rivulets, presented to them the aspect of a delightful country. The crew of the *Pinta* instantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thanksgiving to God, and were joined by those of the other ships, with tears of joy, and transports of congratulations. This office of gratitude to heaven, was followed by an act of justice to their commander. They threw themselves at the feet of Columbus, and implored him to pardon their ignorance, distrust, and insolence; and passing in the warmth of their admiration, from one extreme to another, they now pronounced him, whom they had so lately reviled and threatened, to be a person inspired by heaven with sagacity and fortitude more than human, in order to accomplish a design far beyond the conceptions of all former ages.

As soon as the sun arose, all the boats were manned and armed; they rowed towards the island with their colours displayed, warlike music, and other martial pomp; and as they approached the coast, they saw it covered with a multitude of people, whose attitudes and gestures expressed wonder and astonishment at the strange objects presented to them. Columbus was the first European who set foot in the new world. He landed in a rich dress, with a drawn sword in his hand; his men followed, and kneeling down, they all kissed the ground.

They next erected a crucifix; and prostrating themselves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to such an happy issue. They then took possession of the island for the crown of Castile and Leon, with all the formalities which the Portuguese were accustomed to observe on such occasions.

The Spaniards, while thus employed, were surrounded by many of the natives, who gazed at them with silent admiration. The dress, the fair complexion, beards and arms of the Spaniards, appeared strange and surprising; but nothing astonished the natives more than the vast machines in which they traversed the ocean, that seemed to move upon the water with wings, and uttered a dreadful sound resembling thunder, accompanied with lightning and smoke. These objects struck them with such terror, that they began to respect their new guests as a superior order of beings, and concluded they were the children of the sun, who had descended to visit the earth.

The Europeans were little less amazed at the scene now before them; every herb, shrub, and tree was different from those which flourished in Europe. The soil was rich, and the climate, even to Spaniards, felt warm, though delightful. The inhabitants appeared in the simple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their black hair floated upon their shoulders, or was bound in tresses round their heads; their complexion was of a dusky copper,

copper, their features singular rather than disagreeable, and their aspect gentle and timid. Their faces, and other parts of their bodies, were fantastically painted with glaring colours; they were at first shy, but soon became familiar with the Spaniards, and with transports of joy received from them hawks-bells, glass beads, and other baubles; in return for which they gave such provisions as they had, and some cotton yarn, the only article of value which they could produce. In the evening Columbus returned to his ships, accompanied by many of the islanders in their canoes; and though rudely formed out of the trunk of a single tree, they rowed them with surprising dexterity. Thus, in the first interview between the inhabitants of the old and new worlds, every thing was conducted to their mutual satisfaction. The former, enlightened and ambitious, formed already vast projects of advantage to be derived from the regions now opening to their view; the latter, simple and undiscerning, had no foresight of the calamities and desolation which were approaching their country.

Columbus called this island San Salvador; it is better known by the name of Guanahani, and is one of that large cluster of islands called the Lucaya, or Bahama islands. He observed that most of the people whom he had seen, wore small plates of gold, by way of ornament, in their nostrils; he eagerly inquired where they found that precious metal; they pointed towards the south, and made him

him comprehend by signs that gold abounded in countries situated in that quarter. Thither he directed his course, and discovered Cuba, and afterwards Hispaniola. The natives of the latter possessed gold in greater abundance than their neighbours, which they readily exchanged for bells, beads, or pins; and in this unequal traffic both parties were highly pleased with each other, considering themselves as gainers by the transaction. From the condition of his ships, as well as the temper of his men, Columbus at last found it necessary to return to Europe. In his voyage he encountered a violent storm; and fearful of being shipwrecked, and that all evidence of his discoveries would be lost, he wrote upon parchment a short account of what he had achieved, wrapped it up in an oiled cloth inclosed in a cake of wax, put it into a cask carefully stopped up, and threw it into the sea, in hopes that some fortunate accident might preserve a deposit of so much importance to the world. He arrived, however, at length safe at Palos, seven months and eleven days from the time of his departure. His entrance into Barcelona was conducted, by order of Ferdinand and Isabella, with pomp suitable to the great event which added such distinguished lustre to their reign. The people he had brought with him from the countries he had discovered, marched first, and by their singular complexion, wild peculiarity of features, and uncouth finery, appeared like men of another species; next to them were carried the ornaments of gold fashioned by the rude art of the natives,

the grains of gold found in the mountains, and the dust of the same metal gathered in the rivers. After these were displayed the various commodities and productions of the newly discovered countries. Columbus himself closed the procession, and attracted the eyes and the admiration of all spectators. Ferdinand and Isabella, seated on their thrones, received him with every mark of honour, and heard from him a circumstantial account of his whole voyage.

In his second voyage of full five months, he had a trial of almost every hardship to which mariners are exposed, without making any discovery of importance, except the island of Jamaica. On his return to Hispaniola, he took measures for the safety of the Spanish colony there, who, in his absence, had provoked the vengeance of the harmless natives, by acts of oppression and injury. He imposed a tribute upon all the inhabitants above the age of fourteen; each person who lived where gold was found, was obliged to pay quarterly as much gold dust as filled a hawk's bell; and from those in other parts, twenty-five pounds of cotton were demanded. This was the first regular taxation of the Indians, and served as a precedent for all the extortions to which the natives of the New World have since been compelled to submit. Columbus was led to adopt these measures in order to stop the intrigues and cabals which were carrying on against him; and he was under the necessity of producing such a quantity of gold as would not
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only justify the reports he had made of the fertility of these countries, but encourage Ferdinand and Isabella to persevere in prosecuting his plans.

In his third voyage, in 1498, he pursued a course different from any he had before undertaken, as he was persuaded that the region of India lay to the south-west of the countries he had discovered; he touched first at the Canaries, and then at the Cape de Verd islands. When he came under the line, the heat became so excessive, that many of his wine casks burst, the liquor in them soured, and the provisions corrupted. The Spaniards, who had never ventured so far to the south, were afraid that the ships would take fire, and began to apprehend the reality of what the ancients had taught concerning the destructive qualities of that torrid region of the globe. These circumstances, added to the illness of their commander, brought on by extreme vigilance and anxiety, induced him to alter his course to the north west, in order to reach some of the Caribbee islands, where he might refit, and be supplied with provisions.

On the first of August, the man stationed in the round top, surprised them with the joyful cry of *land!* They stood towards it, and the admiral gave it the name of Trinidad, which it still retains. It lies on the coast of Guiana, near the mouth of the river Oronooko. Columbus justly concluded that this vast body of water, so great as to freshen the ocean many leagues with its flood, could not

be supplied by any island, but must flow through a country of great extent; and of course that he was now arrived at that continent which had so long been the object of his wishes. Full of this idea, he stood to the west, and discovered those provinces of South America now known by the names of Paria and Cumana. He landed in several places, and had some friendly intercourse with the natives, who resembled those of Hispaniola, and wore as ornaments small plates of gold, and pearls of considerable value, which they willingly exchanged for European toys. They seemed to possess better understandings and greater courage than the inhabitants of the islands. The admiral was so much delighted with the beauty and fertility of the country, that, with the warm enthusiasm of a discoverer, he imagined it to be the Paradise described in Scripture, which the Almighty chose for the residence of man while he retained the innocence, which rendered him worthy of such a habitation. He carried off six of the natives, and returned to Hispaniola. Thus had Columbus the glory of discovering the existence of a new world, and was the first man who conducted the Spaniards to that vast continent, which has been the chief seat of their empire, and the source of their treasure in this quarter of the globe. Whilst Columbus was thus nobly employed, Ferdinand and Isabella listened to the complaints of his enemies, and Francis de Bovadilla, a knight of Calatrava, was appointed with full powers to inquire into his conduct in the island of Hispaniola. This envious and unjust
governor

governor treated him as a criminal, and actually sent him and his two brothers in chains to Spain. The king and queen, ashamed of their conduct and their suspicions, ordered him to be set at liberty as soon as he landed; expressed their sorrow for what had passed, and promised him their future protection.

In the year 1502, this adventurous and most enterprising navigator undertook a fourth voyage; when he arrived at St. Domingo, he had the mortification to be refused admission, by the Spanish governor, to enter the harbour; and he was thus excluded from a country of which he had so recently discovered the existence. A storm soon after arose, in which a fleet destined for Spain, consisting of eighteen ships, and commanded by Bovadilla, Roldan, and others, who had been active enemies to Columbus, perished with nearly all their ships; together with them all the wealth acquired by their injustice and cruelty was swallowed up. Among the ships that escaped, one had on board all the effects of Columbus, which had been recovered from the ruin of his fortune. This was a manifest instance of the interposition of divine Providence to avenge the wrongs of an injured man, and to punish the oppressors of an innocent people. Columbus discovered Guanaia, an island not far distant from the coast of Honduras, and all the coast of the continent from cape Gracias a Dios to a harbour which, on account of its beauty, he called Porto Bello. After searching in vain for a passage to the Indian ocean, on his return he was

shipwrecked on the coast of Jamaica. Being driven to great distress in consequence of the natives withholding a supply of provisions, he had recourse to a happy artifice, which not only produced the desired relief, but heightened the favourable ideas the Indians had originally entertained of the Spaniards. By his skill in astronomy, he knew that there would shortly be a total eclipse of the moon. He assembled all the principal persons of the district the day before it happened, reproached them for their fickleness in withdrawing their assistance from men whom they had lately so highly respected, and told them that the Great Spirit was so offended at their want of humanity to the Spaniards, his faithful servants, that, in order to punish them with extreme severity, that very night the moon should withhold her light, and appear of a bloody hue, as a sign of divine wrath, and an emblem of his vengeance ready to fall on them. Some of them heard this denunciation with indifference, and others with astonishment. But when the moon began gradually to be darkened, all were struck with terror; they ran with consternation to their houses, and returned instantly loaded with provisions, which they laid at the feet of Columbus, and requested him to intercede with the Great Spirit to avert the impending destruction. Columbus promised to comply with their desire; and from that time the Spaniards were not only supplied with provisions, but the natives avoided every thing which could give them offence. After experiencing many hardships from the mutiny of his crew, and the dangers of the sea, he

he reached at length the harbour of St. Lucar. There he heard of the death of his patroness queen Isabella, in whose justice and humanity he expected to have found redress for all his grievances. As soon as his health would allow he went to court; but from Ferdinand he received only fair words and unmeaning promises. Disgusted with the ingratitude of this monarch, whom he had served with such fidelity and success, and exhausted with fatigue, he died at Valladolid, aged only 59, A. D. 1506. He closed his life with a magnanimity which suited his character, and with such sentiments of piety and respect for religion, as he had manifested in every occurrence of his life.

While Columbus had been thus engaged, the spirit of naval adventure did not languish in Portugal, the kingdom where it first acquired vigour. Emmanuel the king, who inherited the enterprising character of his predecessor, persisted in the grand scheme of opening a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, and equipped a squadron for that important voyage. He gave the command of it to Vasco de Gama, a man of noble birth, courage, and prudence, equal to the undertaking. He sailed from Lisbon, and had the glory, after encountering violent storms and contrary winds from sailing at an improper season of the year, to double the Cape of Good Hope. He touched at several ports, and came to anchor before the city of Melinda, where he found several vessels from India. Gama then pursued his voyage

with almost absolute certainty of success, and under the conduct of a Mahometan pilot, arrived at Calecut, upon the coast of Malabar, May 22, 1498. He here beheld the wealth, population, industry, and arts of a highly civilized country. But as he possessed neither force to attempt a settlement, nor commodities with which he could carry on commerce, he hastened back to Portugal, with an account of his success in performing a voyage the longest as well as the most difficult that had ever been made since the invention of navigation. He had been absent from Lisbon, whither he returned, two years two months and five days. He brought specimens of the wealth and produce of the country. The Portuguese afterwards made every advantage of this discovery; they soon conquered all the coast of Malabar, took the city of Goa by storm, and made it the capital of their Indian settlements; and from one of the least considerable, became one of the richest powers in Europe, gained extensive dominions in Asia and Africa, and raised a great naval power.

Thus was a new world discovered in the west not inferior in extent to all the other parts of the terraqueous globe. In the east, unknown seas and countries were found out; and a communication so long desired was opened between Europe and the opulent regions of India. Vast objects now presented themselves, and a field was opened for the display of every species of enterprise.

Private adventurers allured by the descriptions which Columbus had given of the new regions which he had visited, offered the court of Spain to fit out squadrons, and go in quest of new countries. One of the first adventurers of this kind was Alonso de Ojeda, an active officer who had accompanied Columbus in his second voyage. Without consulting Columbus, but taking advantage of his charts and his journal, he set sail; he adhered servilely to the direction Columbus had taken, pursued his course to the west, proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, and ranged along a considerable part of the coast where Columbus had touched. Having thus ascertained that this country was part of the continent, Ojeda returned by way of Hispaniola to Spain. In this voyage Ojeda was accompanied by a Florentine gentleman, Amerigo Vespucci by name. He had a chief share in directing the operations during the voyage, as he was an experienced sailor. On his return, he had the address and confidence to frame a narrative in such a manner as to make it appear, that he had first discovered the continent of the New World. As it was the first description of any part of it that had been published, it circulated rapidly, and was read with eagerness and admiration. The country of which Amerigo was supposed to be the discoverer, was called by his name. The error has been continued, and by the universal consent of nations, America is the name bestowed upon this new quarter of the globe, to the great injury

injury of Columbus, thus robbed of the glory, to which his labours had so justly entitled him.

In the first year of the sixteenth century, the successful voyage of Gama to the East Indies, encouraged the king of Portugal to fit out a fleet, with a view not only to carry on trade, but to attempt conquests; and he gave the command of it to Pedro Alvarez Cabral. He avoided the coast of Africa, where he was sure to meet with variable breezes or frequent calms to retard his voyage; boldly stood out to sea, and kept so far to the west, that to his surprise he found himself upon the shore of an unknown country, in the tenth degree beyond the line. He fell in with a country belonging to that province in South America, now known by the name of Brasil. This adventure was the effect of accident, that of Columbus of design, in a man acting upon a regular plan, and that plan executed with no less courage than perseverance.

Thus have we given a concise account of the discovery of the New World. The subject is highly interesting, because it displays a series of skill, activity, and enterprise, exerted to surmount the dangers of the ocean, and directed to the discovery of new and surprising objects. But if we advance farther, and pursue the course of conquest and colonization, sentiments of regret will mingle with our researches, when we find that the European adventurers, and particularly the Spaniards, were
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led by the worst and basest of all motives, the love of gold, to abuse the advantages the new regions presented to them. The Spaniards, making religion the pretext for their conduct, behaved in almost every place with the most shocking inhumanity. Ferdinando Cortes, with eleven ships and 617 men, resolved to explore the continent of South America. He found the empire of Mexico in a state of great prosperity and splendour, and considerably advanced in civilization. As the use of fire arms was not then become common, thirteen only of his soldiers were armed with muskets, thirty-two were cross-bow men, and the rest had swords and spears. They wore jackets quilted with cotton, which they found a sufficient defence against the weapons of the Mexicans. They had sixteen horses, and ten small field pieces. With this force Cortes went forth to conquer dominions more extensive than all the kingdoms then subject to the Spanish crown. Montezuma, the emperor of the Mexicans, received the Spaniards as if they had been a superior order of beings; but he was soon unhappily convinced how much he had over-rated them. Cortes, taking advantage of a slight provocation, seized the emperor, put him in irons, and carried him off a prisoner to his camp. He was afterwards, when offering to mediate between his own subjects and the Spaniards, put to death by one of his own people. The opposition of the Mexicans was feeble and fruitless: the cruelties exercised by their enemies against the royal family, broke their spirits, and

and Cortes became master of the whole empire, A. D. 1527.

In the same year, Diego el Almagra and Francis Pizarro, with 250 foot foldiers and 60 horsemen, landed in Peru, a large and flourishing empire, whose inhabitants were mild and timid, governed by an ancient race of monarchs called Incas. The Inca Atabalipa received the Spaniards with much respect; they required him to embrace the Christian faith, and to surrender all his dominions to the emperor Charles Vth, who had obtained a grant of them from the Pope. The proposal not being understood, the innocent monarch was seized by Pizarro, and his troops massacred multitudes of the unresisting people upon the spot. The empire was plundered of its gold and precious stones; and Atabalipa being suspected of concealing part of his treasures, was tried as a criminal, and burnt at the stake. The perpetrators of these atrocities met with the fate they deserved. D'Almagro was slain in a dispute between him and Pizarro, who was soon after assassinated by the party of his rival. The Spaniards discovered the silver mines of Potosi, which they compelled the Peruvians to work. This weakly race was soon destroyed by such severe labour, and the mines were afterwards wrought by the negroes of Africa.

The Spanish settlements in South America belong to the king, and not to the state. They are governed

governed by three Viceroys of Mexico, Peru, and Terra Ferma, who exercise supreme, civil, and military authority over the provinces.

A few years after the discovery of South America by Columbus, North America was discovered by Sebastian Cabot, in 1499. He was a native of Venice, and employed by the court of England. No attempts were made to plant colonies there till about a century afterwards, when Sir Walter Raleigh, a distinguished foldier and failor, an accomplished scholar, and one of the brightest ornaments of his age, planted the colony of Virginia, so named in honour of Queen Elizabeth. New York and Pensylvania were in the hands of the Dutch, till conquered by the English in the reign of Charles II., who granted the latter province to William Penn, a man of the greatest probity and active benevolence. In his character and conduct we see a complete contrast to Cortez and Pizarro. He treated the natives of his province with kindness; obtained territory from them not by violence and war, but by purchase and full consent. His name is often repeated among the American tribes, as the benefactor of their ancestors.

Among English navigators of more recent times, we distinguish Captains Carteret and Wallis, who in the year 1766 discovered, in the South Seas, the beautiful island of Otaheite. In 1768, Captain Cook, accompanied by Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Solander, visited that island for the purpose of observing

observing the transit of the planet Venus over the disk of the sun, and made several accurate observations on the climate, soil, productions, and inhabitants. Captain Cook continued his voyage, discovered the Society Islands, and Oheterea, and made an accurate survey of the coasts of New Zealand, New Holland, and New Guinea. In the year 1772, this skilful and adventurous navigator undertook a second voyage, for the purpose of making discoveries in the southern polar regions, but was stopped in his progress by vast shoals of ice, in latitude $71^{\circ} 10'$ south, and longitude $106^{\circ} 51'$ west. He afterwards discovered New Caledonia, and a large and dreary island, which he called South Georgia, with various capes, and lofty snow clad coasts, to the most southern part of which he gave the name of the Southern Thule, as the land nearest to the south pole hitherto ascertained. He made the circuit of the vast southern ocean in such a manner as to ascertain that no continent existed in that direction, except so near the pole as to be inaccessible by ships. He performed his voyage from England, of three years and eighteen days, throughout all climates from 52 degrees north latitude to 71 south, with the loss of *only one man* by sickness. The health of the crew was preserved by the great humanity of the captain, and his attention to every circumstance that could promote sobriety, cleanliness, and regularity.

From 1776 to 1779, Captains Cook and Clarke,
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in the ships *Resolution* and *Discovery*, were engaged in a voyage in search of a north-west passage between the continents of Asia and America. Cook discovered the Sandwich Islands, whence he proceeded to explore the north-west coast of America; and on his return from that coast, he was unhappily killed in a quarrel with the natives on the island of Owhyhee, October 14th, 1779. His death was lamented not only in his native country, but in all parts of Europe, where his great merit and public services to the cause of navigation were well known. This voyage ascertained the western boundaries of the great continent of America, and proved, that no practicable passage exists between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans towards the north. The means by which the conquest of the New World was achieved, were not so much owing to superior strength and courage as to the use of fire arms. If the natives had been in possession of gunpowder and iron, the Spaniards must have resorted to other methods to effect their purpose. Their fears would have induced them to respect the rights of mankind; whilst their avarice would have prompted them to resort to the pacific measures of commerce.

The advantages resulting from the discovery and the colonization of the New World, have been nearly all reaped by the Europeans. They have increased their skill in the art of navigation, and confirmed their spirit of adventure. They have obtained a more extensive acquaintance with the
works

works of nature, and the various inhabitants of the globe. They have increased, in a very great degree, the productive labour and commerce of Europe, which are exerted to supply the real and the artificial wants of the inhabitants of the new world. A boundless extent of country has been opened for planting colonies; and these colonies supply their parent countries with various kinds of produce. Yet it is curious to remark, that the proprietors of the mines of Peru and Mexico, the great sources of European riches, have been the least benefited by these possessions. The gold and silver acquired by the Spaniards, as if unhappiness was ordained to be the concomitant of enormous wealth, have been their misfortune and their bane. From the possession of their mines may be dated the decline of the Spaniards in political importance and energy of character. The supplies which the kings of Spain have drawn from their mines, have tempted them to embark in vast schemes of ambition, which have exposed them to loss and disgrace. The luxury and indolence of many of their subjects have been increased; whilst others, more indigent and enterprising, have emigrated to Mexico or Peru, with a view to make their fortunes there; and thus old Spain has been drained of its inhabitants. The demands made for European commodities by these settlers in South America, cannot be answered by Spain and Portugal; other nations, therefore, supply their wants, grow rich while Spain and Portugal are impoverished, and actually gain that gold and silver,
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as the recompence for their industry, which the Spaniards and Portuguese receive and circulate, but cannot retain and enjoy.

While the Old World has been in so many respects the gainer, no proportionable advantages have been secured by the new. In what state were the natives found by Columbus and the other discoverers? They were numerous, simple, contented with the fruits of their soil, strangers to artificial wants, and not oppressed by the yoke of any foreign power. We have noticed enough of their history to ascertain, that a period was soon put to this happy condition. It was their misfortune to make the most innocent use of gold, by wearing it in rude ornaments, and this was the cause of all their misery. The sight of it inflamed the desires of the Spaniards, and led them to the commission of every atrocity to gain possession of the precious metal. The unhappy natives were plundered, enslaved, tortured, and massacred. Some places, particularly Cuba, Hispaniola, and Peru, were almost depopulated. The New World is the scene where slavery has exerted its full sway, and has been exercised with all its horrors. Whatever blessings Divine Providence may have in store for the inhabitants of the New World, resulting from their intercourse with those of the Old, they seem as yet to have received no large portion of them. No small balance is sufficient to liquidate the account of justice and humanity between them and the invaders of their country. If the few remain-

ing descendants of the tribes, who live in the islands and upon the great Continent of America, could be taught the pure and unadulterated truths of Christianity, and if those truths were powerfully recommended by the justice, benevolence, and compassion of the Christians themselves among whom they reside, they might in time, by the blessing of Divine Providence, be convinced, that this spiritual gift was the most valuable that could be bestowed, and the best reparation for the miseries inflicted on their ancestors.

Conclusion.

Such are some of the most striking points, upon which the student will fix his eye in the wide survey of modern history. The numerous improvements in arts and sciences, contribute to do honour to modern times, and they compose such an assemblage of noble and luminous objects, as cannot fail to attract for all ages the curiosity and admiration of mankind.

These pleasing branches of study may lead us to form a just estimate of political affairs, and of the subjects which tend to the moral improvement of the mind. Modern history affords many examples of the prowess of conquerors, who have desolated the world, and of hypocrites, who have deceived it. And yet we may fairly ask, of what benefit to society were the impostures of Mahomet, the victories of Clovis, Charlemagne, Gengis Khan, and
Tamerlane;

Tamerlane; the invasion of William the Conqueror, the political cunning of Charles the fifth, the ambition of Philip the second, and the intrigues of Richelieu and Mazarine? Their empires, triumphs, conquests, and projects, have left little impression behind them, notwithstanding the attention they once attracted, and the violent convulsions which they caused in the state of the world. The mind is refreshed, and turns with delight to more pacific scenes, to trace the discoveries of Columbus and Vasco de Gama, and the beneficial change in religious opinions, which Luther and Calvin produced. We consider with more satisfaction than the recital of battles and sieges can afford, the mild and benevolent spirit of colonization, which actuated the exertions of William Penn; the sublime philosophy of Bacon, Newton, and Locke; and the matchless poetry of Shakspeare, Milton, and Tasso: These have a more beneficial influence in enlarging our knowledge, and satisfying our curiosity, than the most intimate acquaintance with the conquests of the ambitious, and the machinations of the politic. The more the works of war and all military expeditions are examined, the more they wound our feelings, by the calamities they have produced, and much too frequently have we cause to lament, that they occupy so large a portion in the history of past ages, especially in that part of it which relates to Christian nations. They may furnish indeed very instructive lessons of caution, if the rulers of mankind imitate the conduct of prudent mariners, who

remark

remark the situation of rocks and shoals, only from a design to avoid them. How much fairer and more inviting is the prospect of the works of genius, science, arts, and commerce! They charm our attention the longer they are surveyed; and the more intimately we are acquainted with them, the greater is our pleasure, as well as our improvement.

Thus have we seen that the arts and sciences have kept pace with the progress of manners and religion, in adorning and exalting the human mind; and thus has their united light dispelled the shades of ignorance and barbarism. The intellectual powers, after ages of depression, have surmounted the greatest obstacles, and operated through every channel of knowledge.

This interesting part of history displays to us a variety of discoveries, events, improvements, and institutions, which have contributed, in their aggregate effects, to *raise the Character of Man above its former level*, to encourage industry, and diversify its pursuits; to call forth the powers of the mind to every *laudable exertion*, to cherish *all the Virtues*, and make human existence *more valuable*, by INCREASING THE GENERAL STOCK OF MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT, AND PROMOTING SOCIAL ORDER, COMFORT, AND HAPPINESS.

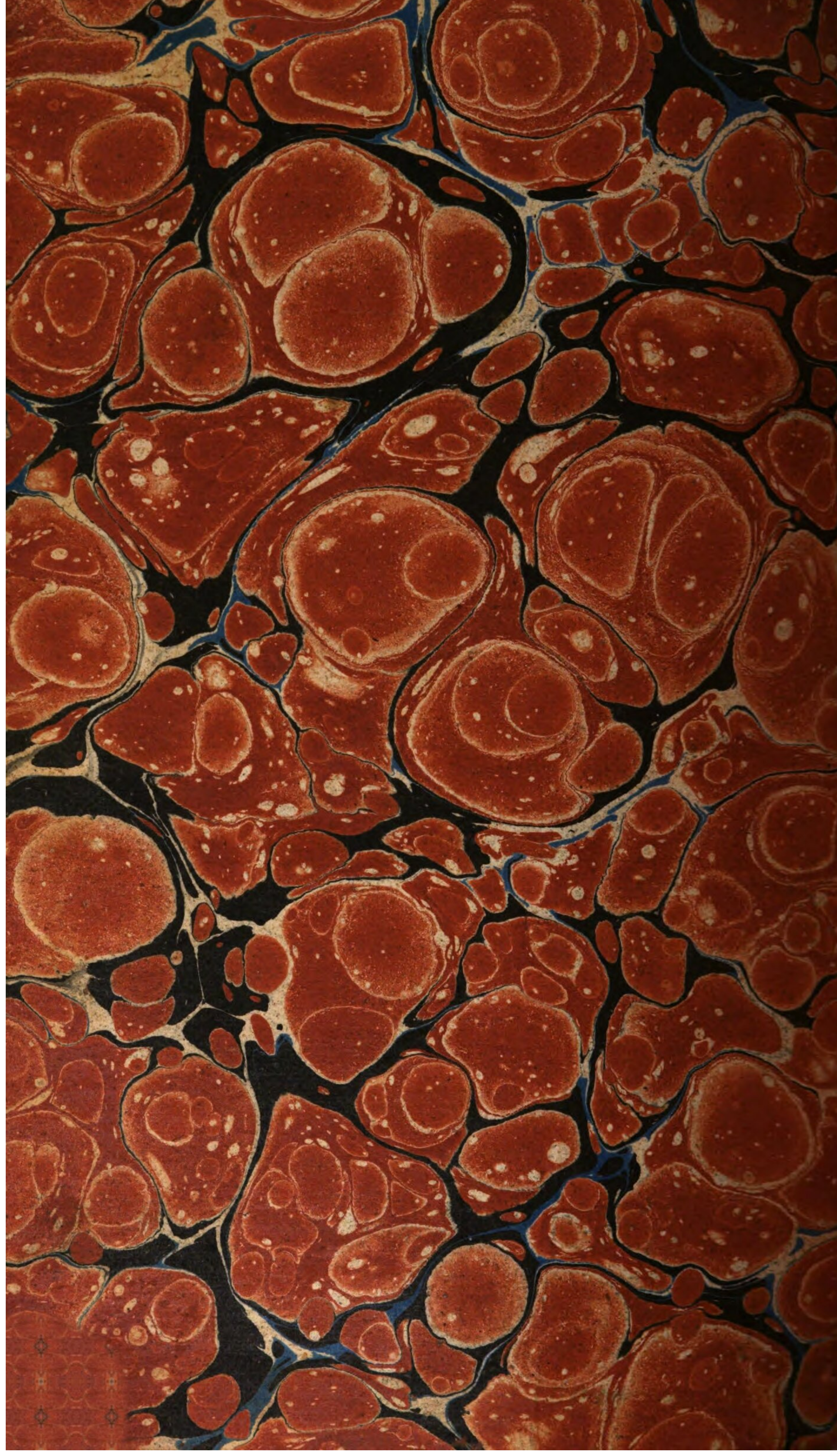
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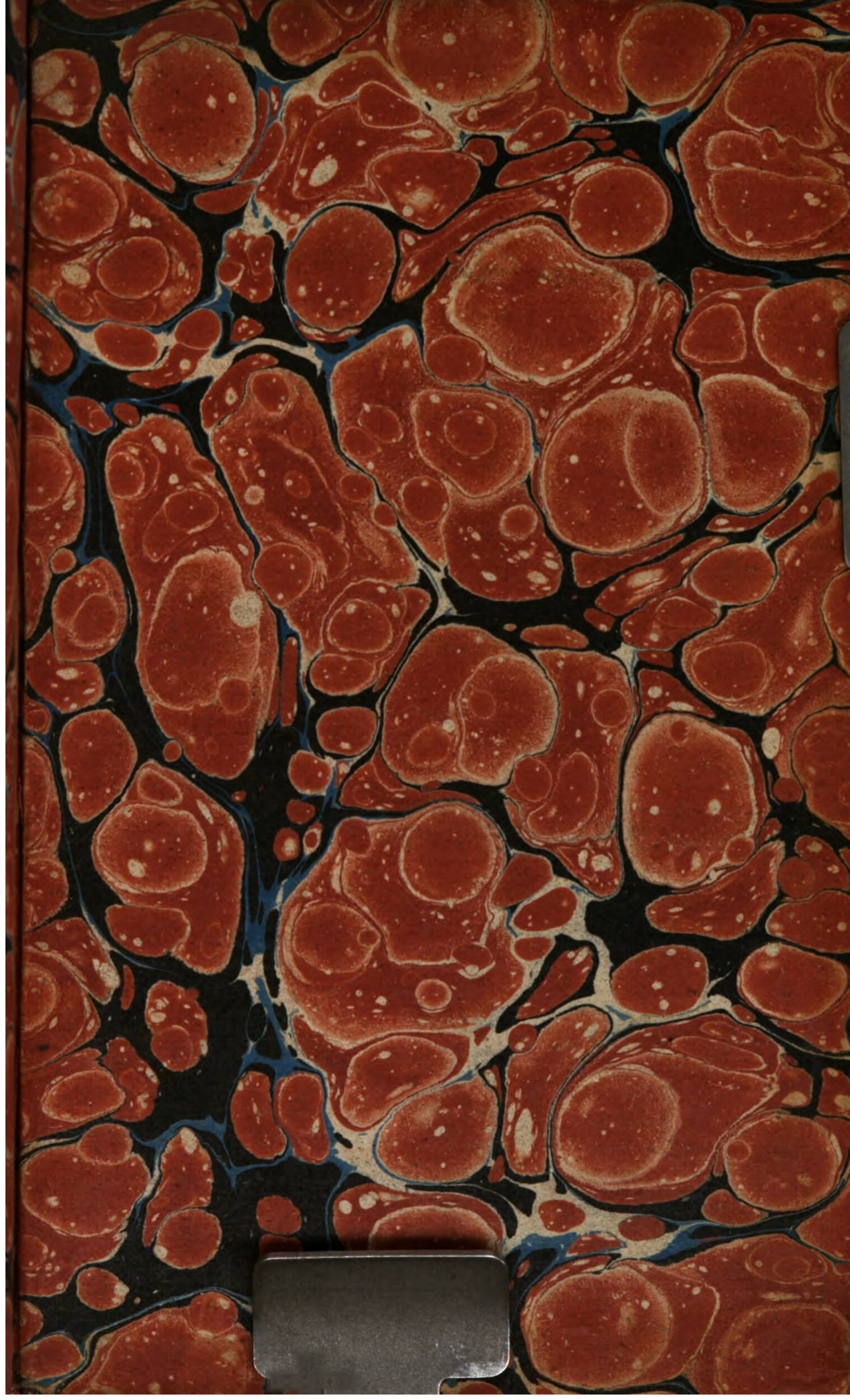
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